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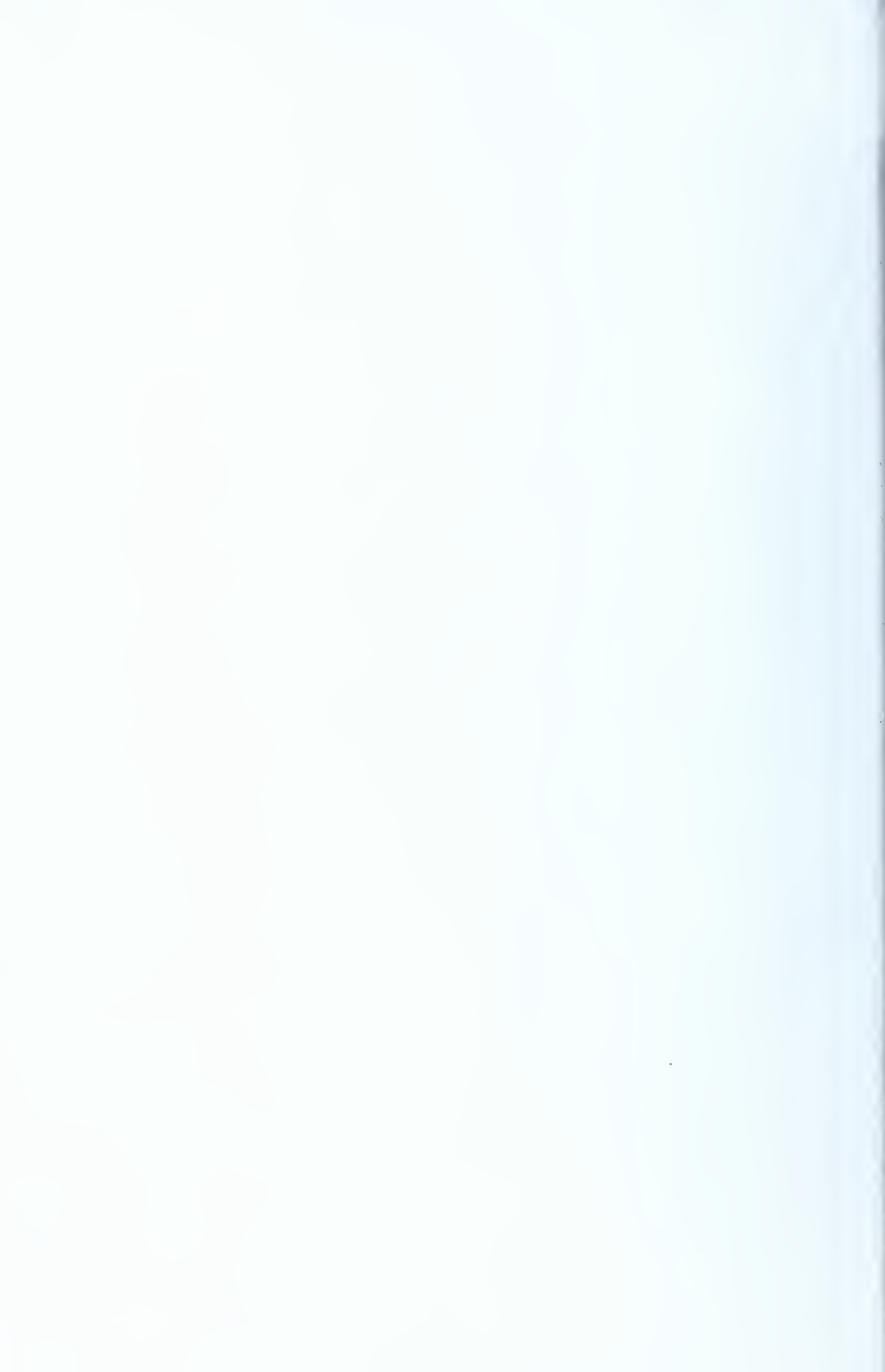




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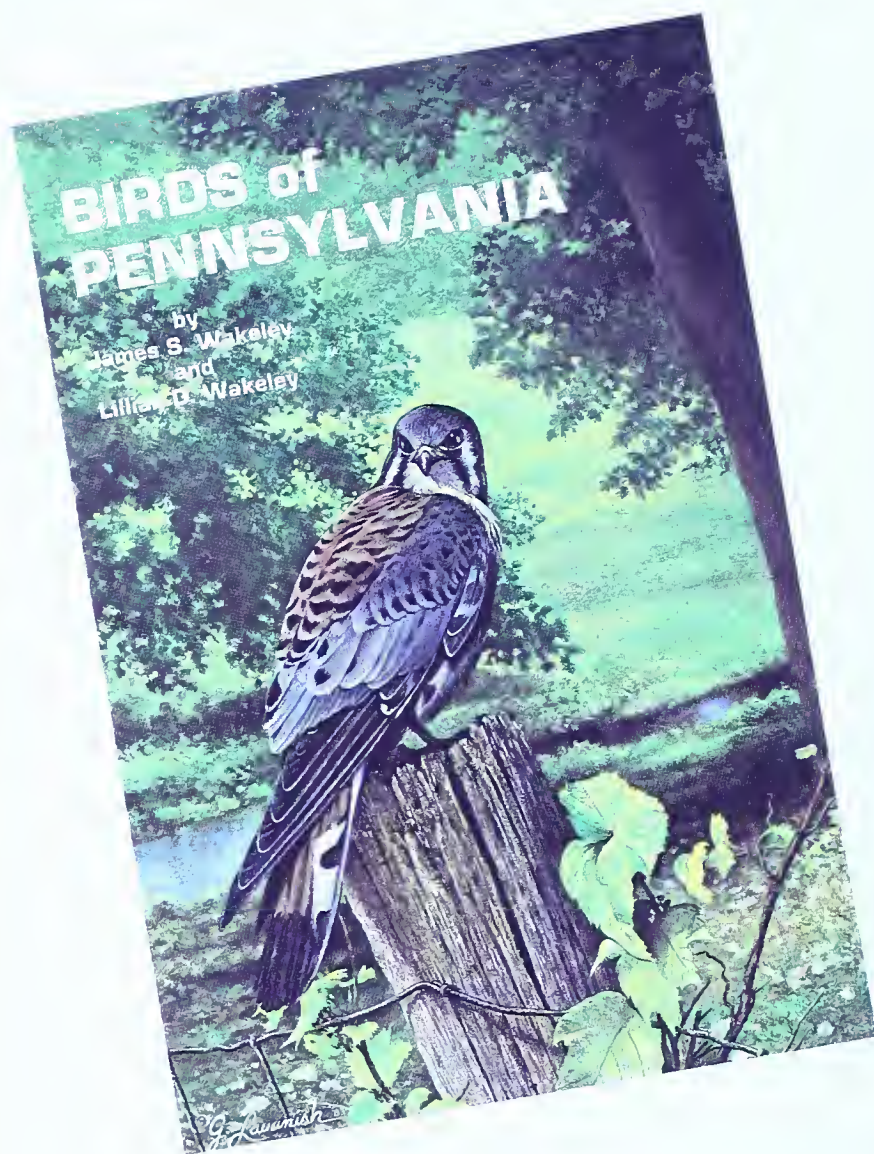
# PENNSYLVANIA GAME NEWS

JANUARY 1988

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**COVER PAINTING BY JOHN PRITKO**  
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PENNSYLVANIA GAME NEWS (ISSN 0031-451X) is published monthly for \$6.00 per year, \$16.50 for three years, or membership in Pennsylvania's Cooperative Farm-Game Project or Safety Zone Project; to Canada and all other foreign countries, \$7.00 U.S. currency, per year. Published by the Pennsylvania Game Commission, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, Pa. 17110-9797. Phone (717) 787-4250. Second-class postage paid at Harrisburg, Pa. CHANGE OF ADDRESS: POSTMASTER: Send both old and new addresses to Pennsylvania Game Commission. Allow six weeks for processing. Material accepted is subject to our requirements for editing and revising. Author payment covers all rights and title to accepted material, including manuscripts, photographs, drawings and illustrations. No information contained in this magazine may be used for advertising or commercial purposes. Copyright © 1987 by the Pennsylvania Game Commission. All rights reserved.

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## Working Together for Wildlife — 1988

**W**ORKING TOGETHER FOR WILDLIFE'S 1988 featured species is the snowy egret. Although it's not a common bird in Pennsylvania, the fact that we enjoy the presence of this bird at all signifies the beginnings of wildlife conservation. On the other hand, the snowy egret also represents one of the greatest challenges facing natural resource managers today.

At the turn of the century snowy egrets were being killed in great numbers. Their ornate nuptial plumage was in much demand for adorning the lavishly styled hats of that time, and their trusting nature made them especially easy targets. But the outcry that resulted when it was realized the snowy egret was on the brink of extinction led to the birth of wildlife conservation in America. Citizens groups were formed, including what has become the National Audubon Society. The National Wildlife Refuge System was created to provide wildlife sanctuaries. And federal and state laws were passed, giving protection to all migratory birds, not only those considered game. In essence, it was the near demise of the snowy egret that helped teach us our wildlife resources cannot be taken for granted, but need to be safeguarded.

The fact that snowy egrets are now thriving in Pennsylvania — and other states farther north than they were ever known to live — serves as a tribute to what concerned citizens can accomplish.

Unfortunately, today the snowy egret exemplifies one of the greatest threats to our natural resources — the loss of wetlands. The extent and causes of wetland losses was discussed in last month's editorial — along with the need for federal land use policies that discourage such destruction. What was only briefly mentioned, however, was what those losses mean to wildlife.

Wetlands contain more kinds and higher numbers of plants and animals than any other type of habitat. The snowy egret, along with a host of other species, need aquatic environments in which to live. When the wetlands are gone, so are the egrets and all the other living things that need such environments.

The Game Commission has an aggressive wetland protection program. Again as mentioned last month, a high priority is placed on acquiring wetlands. Those on State Game Lands are preserved and, with assistance through Ducks Unlimited's MARSH program, enhanced for wildlife. The agency reviews plans for highways, solid waste disposal sites, stripmines and other major construction projects to ensure wetland losses are avoided or minimized and that all federal and state regulations are satisfied. And, to help people better understand — and, we hope, appreciate — the importance of aquatic habitats, we operate visitors centers at Pymatuning, Middle Creek and Siegel Marsh. These facilities are visited by literally hundreds of thousands of people a year.

Participating in this year's Working Together for Wildlife program is a way everybody — hunters and nonhunters — can support the Game Commission's efforts to protect wetlands and the animals that need them.

This year's Working Together for Wildlife fine art print, featured on this month's cover, was painted by John Pritko, Coplay. John's winning design was selected from entries submitted by 15 Pennsylvania artists. As in past years, an issue of 600 signed and numbered full color prints is being produced. Image size is approximately 15 × 22½ inches on acid-free 100 percent rag paper. Price is \$125 delivered. Add \$97.50 if you want it framed. — *Bob Mitchell*



# NEVER ENOUGH TIME?

By Barbara A. McCleester

“**N**EVER ENOUGH TIME,” I complained to my husband a few weeks before buck season. “I’ll have only one day in the first week to hunt.”

“Yes,” Glenn answered, “but you’ll have the whole second week.”

“Everyone knows the bucks are all chased out by then” I retorted.

Still, I had no choice. We have a son Josh, three years old, and a foster daughter also three. A few weeks before deer season we were asked to take two more foster children; brothers, ages one and two. Talking it over, we agreed to take them.

It meant, however, that during the first week of deer season we would be busy with doctor appointments and infant evaluation teams assigned to work with the boys. The only day I had to hunt was the opener. Glenn elected to stay home then and watch the kids while I went out. He then got the rest of the week to hunt.

Fortunately, we don’t have to travel far to hunt. The best deer country in central Pennsylvania is just a step out our door. We live on an old neglected hillside farm, typical of many that existed a century ago. How farmers eked out a living from these steep fields I’ll never know.

## Corn and Goldenrod

Many of these old farms are in the area. Most are slowly turning back into forests, but a few people, ourselves included, are planting some of the fields again. Small patches of corn, alfalfa and buckwheat spring up and vie for space with goldenrod and sumac.

Deer love these little cultivated patches. They seem secure in them, being only a hop and a jump from the protective cover offered by the surrounding woods. I knew their crossings, walked their paths and found



**I COULDN'T BELIEVE** the horns on this one. They captivated my attention. I was still way out of shooting position, though, so I remained motionless. We played a waiting game.

where they bedded. All I had to do was decide which would be the most likely spot to collect a buck.

I chose a time proven stand, one that had produced three bucks in past years. I knew a buck just had to pass by this spot on opening morning.

Well, the first day dawned sunny and warm. As I stealthily approached the flat where I would spend the morning, I kept saying to myself, only one day to get a buck, only one day.

The morning passed all too quickly. A deer was shot within a hundred yards of me; I heard it fall then one guy say to another, “nice four point.” There were other shots, farther away, but not one deer did I spy.



**MY NERVES** were about to shatter. Another step brought him within 15 yards, but now he was behind a tree. I swung my gun around and got ready for him to step out.

I slowly headed back to the house for lunch and to see how Glenn was coming along with the kids. From the dejected look on my face he knew better than to ask if I'd gotten anything.

"Don't worry," he said. "You've got all afternoon."

Because I hadn't seen any deer in the morning, I decided to change my strategy for the afternoon. I figured the deer were using a trail below the one I had been watching.

### Into Some Laurel

I moved lower, into some laurel, sat down against an old apple tree with the sun behind me and waited. In front of me was a small ravine filled with old apple trees and with a small trickling spring. To my left was a rather steep hillside covered with grapevines that deer normally skirted around. If any deer came through the hollow I figured they'd pass me.

As the day waned, so did my hopes. It was warm and sunny, and the leaves were so dry it was impossible to take a step without sounding like an approaching infantry. The last thing I expected was to have a deer sneak up on

me, but, out of the laurel to my right, stepped a small button buck.

Now the little critter wasn't legal game, not that I could have shot anyway. He was 20 yards away, looking right at me, and my gun was pointed in the opposite direction.

It still amazes me that he got so close without me hearing him. When I blinked he took off. But just as he disappeared another appeared. I couldn't believe the horns on this one; they captivated my attention. I was still way out of shooting position, though, so I remained motionless.

### Waiting Game

We played a waiting game. This crafty fellow knew something was amiss. His nostrils were trying the air, maybe to see why the smaller buck had darted away. He didn't seem to smell me though, but he was staring right at me. Lifting one cloven hoof, he stamped. I didn't blink, I didn't even breathe.

In my sitting position I was at eye level with him. I didn't make a move. Then finally, after what seemed like an eternity, he took a step to get a better view. Only thing was, he stepped right toward me.

My nerves were about to shatter. The buck knew danger was present—I could see him trembling—but he didn't know from where.

Another step brought him within 15 yards, but now he was behind a tree. I swung my gun and upper body around and got ready for him to step out from behind the tree.

Waiting seemed forever. Just when I thought I couldn't hold my rifle up any longer, out he stepped. I placed the bead low behind his front shoulder and squeezed the trigger. He went off like a rocket.

I jumped up—at least 15 feet in the air, it seemed—and pumped another cartridge into the chamber. I couldn't believe I had missed. As he was bounding away I fired again just before he disappeared into the tangled undergrowth. It was then that I started shak-

ing. I couldn't have missed twice, I thought.

Chambering another shell, I went looking for signs of a hit. A spot of blood and pieces of hair proved I had hit him on my first shot. Looking ahead, I saw something shining in the retreating sunlight. It was a huge set of antlers. I walked slowly, waiting for the big buck to get up. He never moved as I nudged his back with my boot.

Just then my legs gave out, not from exertion or fatigue. I had to sit down a few minutes and marvel at the beautiful trophy before me.

At a distance, antlers often look bigger than they really are. I shot a spike one time I swore had six-inch spikes. When I walked up to him though, I saw they were only three inches high. But the regal buck I had just downed was bigger than I'd thought. Four evenly matched tines on each side. Looked like a 20-inch spread, too.

Gathering my senses I started to field dress the buck. There was only one bullet hole in him. Even at such close range, the bullet never came out. I had made a perfect heart shot.

I had no rope, but I managed to drag him close to a neighboring farmhouse where I covered him with brush. I didn't want anybody finding him.

I then hotfooted it to a friend's farm-



**THE REGAL BUCK** I'd downed was even bigger than I had thought. It had four evenly matched tines on each side, and what looked like a 20-inch spread. I'd made a perfect heart shot.

house and called home to tell Glenn to bring a rope and the car around to the bottom of the hollow. I didn't tell him how big the deer was, just that it was an 8-point.

Glenn first spotted the deer as we walked up to it and — using a phrase I'll never use again — muttered, "Never enough time? Huh!"

---

## Fifth Southwestern Outdoors Show

The Fifth Southwestern Outdoors Show will be held January 29–31 at the War Memorial in Johnstown, with doors opening at 10 a.m. each day. The Pennsylvania Game Commission will cosponsor the Student Education Program on the first day, and GAME NEWS gun columnist Don Lewis is scheduled to present a rifle seminar on the last day. Other Commission-related programs include one on bald eagle recovery by WCO Dennis Jones, information on the trap and transfer of wild turkeys, Biologist Gary Alt on black bears, IES Barry Moore on field care and dressing of wild turkeys, and WCO Dick Weaver at the Commission's booth. Other outdoor authorities who will present programs are Mike Ondik on deer, Earl Shriver on birds of prey, Duane Biller on reptiles, Kathryn Longer on dog training, and Bob Clark on hunting the wild turkey. Clayt and Adele Dovey will discuss cinematography, while Joe Workosky covers wildlife photography and Bill Goughenour talks on trapping and game calling.



# Patti's Buck

By Tom Tatum

THE GUNSHOT was close, so close I couldn't be sure where it came from, but it *did* sound like the pop of my 243. Four does scrambling down from above confirmed my suspicions; Patti had gotten a shot. I crossed my fingers and waited for our predetermined signal for success. In a moment I heard a bad imitation of a cawing crow. I started up the mountain with a smile on my face.

Patti has been my hunting companion even longer than the seven years she's been my wife, and if anyone deserved some deer hunting success, it was she. Although Patti has only actually been hunting for three years, she has paid her dues. Many times she made the arduous two-mile climb up Blacklog Mountain only to keep me company.

One year, on the last day of the second bow season, she sat shivering for hours in subfreezing temperatures while I, in a treestand above her, waited for a shot. By the time a trio of does walked by I was too cold to nock an arrow let alone shoot one. Then there was the time we sat in the pouring rain on the last Saturday of buck season. I held the rifle, she the umbrella, for six miserable, unproductive hours.

## Hunting Alone

She just doesn't like me to go hunting alone, especially when I'm traveling halfway across the state and then climbing a mountain for an hour and a half. One year, as it turned out, her concerns were justified. I had been unsuccessful during the regular rifle season, but as Patti had given me a flintlock kit the Christmas before, I was anxious to try the black powder season. I took off for Fulton County and Blacklog Mountain. Patti, as usual, tagged along. It's a good thing she did.

The sun was just breaking over the horizon as we reached the mountain-top. I led the way through the dim gray light of morning. Less than 100 yards from our stand I stepped down from a large rock and face first into some unseen branches. One of them caught beneath the left lens of my glasses and gouged my eye. Anyone who has ever suffered a lacerated cornea knows how painful it is. Despite my agony (it felt like I had a load of gravel under my eyelid), I attempted to continue the hunt. Patti kept watch for deer as I sat with my eyes tearing, squeezed shut against the now excruciating sunlight. I finally accepted the hopelessness of the situation and gave up. I unloaded the flintlock and humbly let Patti lead me, blindly stumbling and falling, the two miles back to the truck. She drove for another three hours to get me home and then to the doctor. I would have been in a bad way without her.

Not surprisingly, after being a loyal spectator for so long, Patti decided to give deer hunting a try herself. "As long as I'm sitting in the woods," she said, "I might as well be hunting." I agreed, so, three years ago she completed a hunter ed course, bought a hunting license, borrowed a Winchester 30-30 and began her quest.

Pressed for time that year, she got to fire the borrowed rifle only a few times. Even without a scope she could hit consistently a small paper bag at 50 yards. That would be good enough, we thought. On opening day I bagged a little spike just after sunrise, then dragged it within sight of Patti's stand at the very top of the mountain. Because my 243 had a scope, I decided to let her use it. She agreed, so we exchanged guns and I unloaded hers and leaned it against a tree. She told me she had seen four deer that morning. One was a forkhorn that passed within 30







yards. She couldn't get a clear shot, though, because he was shielded by a doe. She had made the right choice in holding her fire. We both settled back against the old oak that was her stand, facing in different directions.

It was just about noon when Patti got her first real taste of what buck hunting in Penn's Woods is all about.

"Something's coming," she said softly. "It's a buck." She was right. It was a buck—a 6-point, maybe better—and he was sneaking over the ridge only 50 yards away. Patti was kneeling, aiming unsteadily. The buck, perhaps sensing our presence, suddenly froze. "What should I do?" she whispered. "He stopped behind those trees."

Because my hands were pressed tightly against my ears in anticipation of her shot, I had a hard time hearing her. "Just wait for an open shot," I advised, "and take it." For what seemed like hours I held my hands to my ears, the buck stood his ground, and the rifle barrel hung suspended in air, inches away. Finally, I heard the muzzle blast. A rotten old trunk at least five yards from the deer exploded, filling the air with splinters and sawdust. The buck leaped ten feet, then stopped in a clearing. It would be an easy shot, but the shot didn't come. I looked over to see Patti struggling to work the bolt. I reached over and slapped it open with a hard smack from my palm. Patti ejected the spent casing and threw in a fresh cartridge.

### **Had Buck's Attention**

By now we had the buck's attention and he wasn't about to cooperate any longer. Patti fired a desperation shot as he disappeared over the ridge.

A thorough search of the area confirmed a clean miss. Patti was upset, but it was really my fault. Here she was hunting with a gun she had not practiced with. I also had failed to remind her of something every good deer hunter discovers early on: don't aim at a moving deer; find a clear opening and aim at the spot where he will be, then take the shot when he gets there.

That invaluable advice was given to me by George Starr, my deer hunting mentor, who has taken more bucks than I can count. That piece of advice, along with others, has helped me harvest ten bucks in the last thirteen years, all on state game lands. At any rate, after I assumed responsibility for Patti's miss, she felt a little better, but that was the only chance she would have that year.

### **Same Stands**

Opening day of the next year found us back at the same hunting stands. It was a slow morning. I caught only a fleeting glimpse of two deer running at top speed through the laurel. Around 11 o'clock a hunter came through the woods. He saw me and cut down below, disappearing into a gray fog that had descended. Less than ten minutes later I heard the shots. One. A short pause. Two. A long, long pause. And, finally, three. At first I thought the shots came from in front of me, but the third one had sounded like it was more uphill, to my left. Curiosity got the best of me, so I walked back up to Patti's stand. She wasn't there. She was about 70 yards away, searching the ground. When she saw me she gave me the thumbs down sign. It seems that all three shots were hers. She had missed a spike buck standing broadside. Again she was disgusted. "Some guys hunt all their lives and never see a buck," she said. "I've missed two in two years."

I should point out that Patti was again using a borrowed rifle, this time a neighbor's 308, and, once again, she'd had precious little time to practice with it. Nonetheless, she still felt pretty bad. About two hours later I missed an 8-point running with a little forkhorn, but I managed to nail the 4-point so the day was a success after all.

Because I had booked a Montana elk hunt for the next year, I decided to break down and buy another rifle. I figured my 243 was too light for elk, so I moved up to a 7mm Magnum. That made the 243 available for Patti, so we knew that this year, at least, she

wouldn't have to borrow a rifle. When I went to the rifle range to sight in and practice with the 7mm, she came along and used the 243. She started shooting some pretty nice groups in no time. Now she could work the action, load and unload quickly, and comfortably handle the gun with confidence. Admittedly, these were lessons I should have taught her before her first hunt, but our lack of an accessible gun made that difficult. So now, finally, as she began her third hunt, she was ready.

We drove through the night and arrived at Blacklog about 6 on the morning of opening day. We had gotten a late start and by the time we reached our stands it was well after 7 and already getting light. I dropped her off at her spot and walked the 200 yards to my stand. I was in for an unhappy surprise: somebody was already settled in by my tree. It looked like the hunter I had seen the year before. I was paying the price for our late start.

### Not Confident

Discouraged, I walked along the drop-off and over the next rise, not feeling very confident now that my lucky spot had been taken. I had barely gotten comfortable on my hot seat when I heard the shot. At first I was sick because I thought that the hunter in my spot had fired it, but when the four does came running down from above, I knew it had to be Patti's. As I walked toward her stand I blew on my goose call, my response to her crow cawing signal. When I spotted her she was wearing a big smile and was giving me the thumbs up sign. She had taken a nice 5-point with one perfectly placed 60-yard shot. She was very happy, but not as happy as I.

After I field-dressed the buck and hung it up to cool, we sat together to see if I could collect one. I could see why Patti had gotten three chances at three bucks in just three years. She had learned the cardinal rule of stand hunting: keep perfectly still. I fidgeted a lot more than she did. A sense of loyalty to my little 243 had prompted me to un-



**WHEN I SPOTTED Patti she was wearing a big smile and was giving me the thumbs up sign. She had taken a nice 5-point with one perfectly placed 60-yard shot.**

load the 7mm and use the light gun.

"Here comes a buck," Patti whispered suddenly.

It was embarrassing, but I couldn't see it. "Where?" I pleaded, my gaze searching the woods.

"Straight ahead," she said. "About 70 yards."

She was right. A spike was angling up along the ridge in our general direction. When he stopped some 50 yards away I took my shot and somehow managed to completely miss. I wouldn't get my buck that year but, in light of the events that had taken place, that hardly seemed important.

When friends found out about our hunt they congratulated Patti and, of course, made fun of me. Needless to say, I didn't mind. A month later we would discover that not only had Patti gotten her first buck, but she was pregnant when she did it. So now, when people ask us if we want a boy or a girl, we give them the traditional response and tell them we really don't care, so long as it's a deer hunter. When I tell Patti's story to other hunters they just shake their heads. "She sure is lucky," they say.

"No," I answer. "I am."



# KEEPING THE MEMORIES PLEASANT

By Carl W. McCardell



**I WAS SNEAKING** along when I caught a movement on the side of a tree no more than 30 yards from me. It looked like a gray squirrel's tail twitching.

**IT** HAD always been a great spot for squirrels. Dad and I had hunted there often.

My mind raced back to one of our first hunts in this woodlot, several years earlier. We had unsuccessfully tramped all day through the fields, hoping to put a ringneck or two in our game bags. We did not even glimpse a hen.

As Dad and I approached the woodlot at the end of a huge cornfield, we stopped to listen and watch. Only three minutes passed before a large gray squirrel moved from his hiding place. Suddenly, two more squirrels which

had apparently concealed themselves as we approached, came to life. Then a fourth bushytail started racing through the tree tops.

It appeared as though all four grays were converging on the tall oak under which I was standing. I could hardly contain myself. Dad must have sensed my impatience, for he motioned that I should wait until they reached my tree.

I pushed off the safety of my 20-gauge double-barrel and shot the first squirrel as he reached one of the tall limbs. The other three scampered furiously toward their den, but I dropped the second just as Dad got the squirrel closest to him. I quickly reloaded the little 20-gauge and, on my second shot, added the fourth squirrel to our bag. Dad and I just looked at each other. The shooting had come so quickly it was hard to reconstruct what had happened.

We gathered up the squirrels, put our empty guns over our shoulders, and happily began to walk the short distance home. Halfway to the house two ringnecks exploded from some brush scarcely 20 yards ahead. We watched helplessly as they flew across the field and into the woods. With only ten minutes of shooting time left, and not having seen a single pheasant that day, we'd been completely unprepared for the closing scene that had just taken place.

Memories of that particular hunt were crossing my mind as I came to the familiar woodlot again. I was older now, old enough to hunt by myself, something every young hunter looks forward to.

The air was warmer than usual but the smell of autumn was still there. I was sneaking along when I caught a

movement on the side of a tree no more than 30 yards from me. It looked like a gray squirrel's tail nervously twitching back and forth. It appeared and then, just as fast, disappeared.

If it sticks its head around that tree, I'm going to shoot, I thought as I crept forward.

My quarry came into view again, but I had an overwhelming desire to get a little closer, just to make sure. After all, Dad had told me to always be sure of my target.

I took two more steps and to my horror saw a man leaning against the far side of the tree. He was wearing a fur hat with a tassel on the side that twitched when he turned his head—what I'd thought was a squirrel's tail.

For what seemed like a full minute I stood there, numb, envisioning what could have happened. I breathed a

silent prayer of thanks for the Lord's help in this situation. I also swore to keep this event in mind on all future hunts.

Looking back now, much later, I know I should have told my fellow hunter how close he came to being mistaken for game. But being a teenager then and shaking in my boots, I ended the hunt for the day.

The pleasant memories of the woodlot hunts like the one described earlier could have been tarnished forever. The autumn smells, sounds and colorful foliage would have been a constant reminder of a terrible event instead of bringing joy as they do today.

Let all of us who enjoy hunting do our best to keep the memories pleasant. Wearing clothing that will set us apart from the game being hunted is the first step in ensuring that.

## Busy Time

During the spring, bluebirds are busy creatures. They lay two or three broods a year, three to eight eggs per clutch. Once the eggs hatch, usually on the same day, it's almost a continuous hunt for food, as their hungry youngsters require feeding about once every 20 minutes.

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**HUNKERED DOWN** with my back to a tree, I glanced over my shoulder to see three deer running through the brush. The last one was a buck.

# I'd Rather Be Lucky!

**James D. Hockenberry**

**I** HAVE A favorite line I just love to lay on people and that's: "I don't love to hunt, I live to hunt."

I suppose you could extend this "Hawkism" further to include, "... and when I'm not hunting—I live to talk about it."

To me, one of the true joys of life is listening to, or spinning my own, hunting yarns. Especially deer hunting stories. As a matter of fact, as soon as I'm introduced to someone and have forced myself to observe the required social amenities, I ask, "Do you do any hunting?"

If the answer is no, I mumble something, shuffle my feet for a few moments, and then manufacture a reason to take my leave.

Now, don't get me wrong. I don't really have anything against non-hunters. But think about it. How could you possibly have anything in common with a man who willingly spends his free time indoors? Besides, I like

hunters. They're good people. Interesting and generally down to earth. Fun to be around. So, if the answer is yes, spirited conversation is bound to follow, which inevitably leads to my next query. "Did you get your deer last season?"

I love to be regaled with tales of relentless pursuit and the eventual taking of trophy, or even not-so-trophy, bucks. I'm eternally impressed by hunters who relate how they watched a particular old mossie all summer and fall, learning his every habit, then during the season tracked him persistently for a week before finally getting a shot.

I happen to know, personally, two hunters who possess such determination. One of them, "Whitey" Swiss-helm, who lives up in Crawford County, doesn't even know that the phrase "to give up" exists. He'll track a deer across two counties.

Whitey will hunt a patch of woods for a week if he figures a buck is even



*thinking* about going in there. His patience is inspiring. He just knows that sooner or later he's going to get a deer.

Another buddy, Clyde Harris of Zelienople, once tracked a buck so far the hapless whitetail passed out from exhaustion.

A dozen or so years ago, Clyde spent opening day without seeing a deer. Let me tell you, the next morning determination was oozing from his pores. He left the cabin mumbling something about not coming back till he got a buck. I mean, he started up that mountain with wide eyes, flared nostrils and white knuckles.

At the top of the ridge behind camp he encountered another hunter who had missed a buck on the other side of the ridge just at sunup, and had tracked it this far to determine that it hadn't been wounded. For some reason the other fellow was giving up the trail, so Clyde picked it up. He tracked that buck for hours. He tracked it right past other hunters who never saw it. Past an old-timer who missed it again. Across a hard road and across Laurel Run. He tracked it so far, in fact, the buck finally lay down to rest and Clyde nailed it.

### Persistence and Skill

I love stories like that. You have to admire the persistence and skill it takes to get your buck that way. But I'll tell you the truth—personally, I'd rather be lucky.

Once in the mid '60s I was hunting in the Parker Dam area of Clearfield County. Back then I hunted out of the Crab Hollow Sportsmen's Association on Moose Grade Road, a grand bunch of guys and a fine old camp to belong to.

Before buying that camp several of us followed the usually unfounded fables of huge buck concentrations from place to place. Medix Run, Coudersport, Benezette, Warren, Hearts Content, Kane, Tionesta; you name it, we hunted it. Searching out the legendary hotspots like a misled prospector seeking out the Lost Dutchman Mine.



**BACK THEN, I smoked a pipe. This particular day was especially windy. It's almost impossible to light a pipe in a stiff breeze, even with the big blue headed kitchen matches I carried, so . . .**

We always took vacation the whole first week of buck season, then almost made a job out of hunting. Up at four-thirty and into the mountains before daylight, never coming out until dark. Driving, posting, stalking, stillhunting; our only break a cold sandwich somewhere under the edge of a cold windy ridge.

After we bought the camp, though, I succumbed to the siren call of creature comfort and, for a while, developed a rather cavalier attitude toward hunting. I'd still be out in the woods before daylight, but along about eleven o'clock or so, I'd wander back in for some rather extensive lunches next to the heat source.

Anyway, this particular opening day I answered the urge of my hunger sensor and was on my way back to camp. I came down off of Snow Trail, crossed through the perimeter of the gas well and stopped at a huge oak. I hunkered down with my back to the tree, strictly to take a breather. The quest for food can sometimes be tiring. For some inexplicable reason I glanced over my left shoulder. Three deer were running



**I HUNKERED DOWN** against a hemlock to shield myself from the wind and happened to glance down a tunnel into the laurel. A deer's head came into view. It had antlers, so I shot it.

through the brushy, stick wood strip between my tree and the trickle known as Mud Run. The last one was a buck. I eased around on the other side of the big oak and dropped him as he came into view. A classic example of being in the right place at the right time.

A few years later I spent the whole season without seeing a horn. The last day I couldn't keep my enthusiasm flowing, so about three-thirty decided to drift back to camp and pack my gear for an early start back to civilization. For all intents and purposes I had given up on hunting. I was just moseying along, rifle slung on my shoulder.

I picked my way through a series of beaver dams, then into some huge hemlocks that bordered a wide patch of mountain laurel, all but impossible to see through or even into. The hemlocks were towering and majestic. Occasional shafts of sunlight slanted through these mighty conifers to sparkle on the fresh snow cover. The scene

elicited a certain quiet reverence, something this chronic daydreamer couldn't resist.

Back then, before my personal physician threatened me with bodily harm if I didn't quit, I smoked a pipe. Now this particular day was especially windy. Any pipe smoker will tell you it's an almost impossible task to light one in a stiff breeze. Even with the big blue headed kitchen matches I carried.

After numerous unsuccessful attempts I hunkered down against a huge hemlock to shield myself from the wind. I happened to look up and notice an unusual path, almost like a tunnel, where I could see a good hundred yards into the heavy laurel. While I was idly studying this, a deer's head came into view about three-quarters of the way along the curious opening. And it had antlers. All I could see was the head. I put down my Missouri meerschaum, assumed the sitting position and shot that buck just under his right ear.

My all time favorite example of the part luck plays in deer hunting, though, occurred in 1977. I spent opening morning on a frigid hilltop in Crawford County. I was on the very edge of a hardwood patch which overlooked a steeply descending field. About 200 yards below me the field ended and a heavily overgrown swampy woods started. This same woods then continued up a hillside directly across from me, covering it, except for one small snow covered field in the middle.

### The Exception

Normally this was an outstanding crossing. This day was the exception. I had seen only a half-dozen deer or so, all at a distance. And it was cold. An incessant wind came across that open field, hitting me full in the face like the blast of some infernal Arctic wind tunnel.

With each uneventful moment my attention became increasingly distracted by thoughts of a thermos of hot coffee in my Blazer. Finally, about a quarter to twelve, I made up my mind



to slip down to the truck, get some of that steaming black brew, eat my lunch with the heater on, and come back for the afternoon.

My hunting coat is an antiquated model with a detachable game bag. I carry everything imaginable back there—drag rope, extra gloves, piece of inner tube to sit on, heart and liver bag, and various and sundry other necessities.

### Temperamental Snap

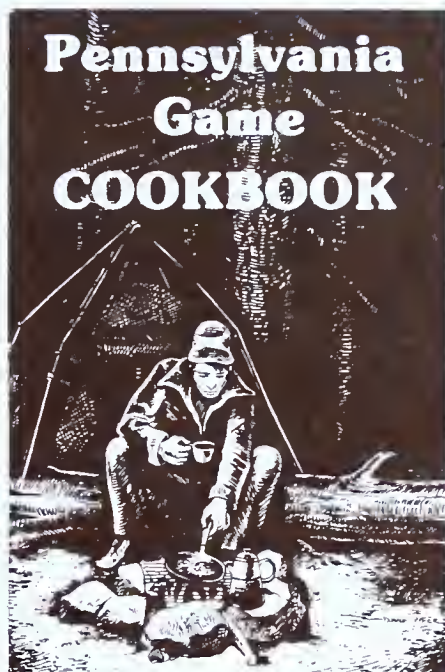
This rig buttons on top to a strip of material attached to the coat, and on either corner of the bottom is secured by a heavy duty snap. My outfit has one temperamental snap. If the game-bag becomes unattached it flaps back and forth, catches on everything, and makes a general nuisance of itself. This day it came undone, and try as I might I couldn't get it re-snapped.

It was so cold I didn't want to take the coat off, so I was trying to reach around behind me to secure the snap without being able to see it, using fingers about as limber as oak sticks. The more I struggled the more stubborn I became.

While locked in battle with the belligerent snap, I happened to glance at the field on the far hillside. A solitary deer was sneaking across, headed in my direction. But it had to be 600 or 700 yards across there. Maybe more.

Several minutes later, though, I saw the deer again. This time it was standing inside the edge of the woods, surveying the field separating us. By now I had forgotten the stubborn snap. The deer looked around for a few seconds, then got things into gear and started across the field at flank speed. The moment he hit the open field I saw antlers.

I raised "Big Medicine," my '06, and eased down on one knee. The buck was headed directly at me. About 50 yards from me he changed his mind and did a



Pennsylvania Game Cookbook is a 96-page collection of delicious recipes submitted by GAME NEWS readers. It includes methods of preparing all kinds of game available in Pennsylvania, plus some recipes for moose, elk, and other species. \$4.00 delivered from GAME NEWS office.

90-degree turn to his left, offering a full side shot. My 150-gr. Power Point hit this fine 6-point in the base of the neck.

If it hadn't been for a balky snap on a detachable game bag, I'd have been trudging down the hill behind me on the way to my truck when that shot was offered. Pure unadulterated luck.

Yes, I love thrilling stories about undaunted perseverance and utter determination in deer hunting. I could listen to them all night long. But personally, I'd rather be lucky!

# Pennsylvania Game Commission

## ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 1986–June 30, 1987

### EXECUTIVE OFFICE

**Peter S. Duncan**  
Executive Director

Through the dedicated efforts of sportsmen, legislators, agency employees and Commissioners, the Game Commission has finally moved to its new Harrisburg headquarters complex. This monumental task has been in the works since the late 1960s, when it became evident the agency could no longer be housed in the state government complex downtown. At that time alternate sites were investigated and plans for a building explored. At times, financial considerations precluded construction of a new building, but with the diligent efforts exhibited by those in the past and the present, the building is finally completed. We expect to have the training school in full operation and a class of trainees enrolled by late spring or early summer. The training facility also will give us the opportunity to provide continuous training for all our employees, which is so important in keeping abreast of the changes in wildlife management.

The acquisition from Michigan of Sichuan pheasant males in the spring of 1987 marks the beginning of a study to ascertain if this bird can better adapt to the changing habitats within the Commonwealth than the ringneck has. Though cautiously optimistic, it will be some years before we will know if this project can succeed.

In October 1986, the Commission approved the preparation of a long-range planning effort encompassing all phases of the Commission's operation. A planning team has been organized from employees within the Commission. Within the year, we anticipate drafts of the plan will be available for review and comment by the public.

Training has been presented to all of our law enforcement personnel on the new Game and Wildlife Code and the accompanying regulations contained in Title 58 of the Pennsylvania Code. We are dedicated to the fair and impartial enforcement of the Code for all citizens of the Commonwealth. The substantial increase in fines has been long overdue for those per-

sons who attempt to destroy our wildlife heritage.

At their January 1987 meeting the Commissioners approved a ban on lead shot for waterfowl hunting, beginning with the 1988–89 seasons. To help sportsmen adjust to this regulation the agency has developed training courses for individuals and clubs interested in becoming familiar with nontoxic shot.

As we close out the fiscal year, which now coincides with our new licensing year (July through June), we can be thankful for the support received from the citizens of Pennsylvania in our continued efforts to protect the state's wildlife resources. However, we must continue our vigilance to ensure that those not willing to abide by the law or who want only to destroy habitat are made to account for their actions. We must continue to instill the conservation ethic in all of our citizens if we are to successfully protect our valuable outdoor heritage for future generations.

### BUREAU OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

**Kenneth L. Hess**  
Director

This bureau encompasses the Personnel, Hunting License, Automotive and Procurement, Office Services, Labor Relations and Training divisions, plus the Ross Leffler School of Conservation.

#### Personnel Division

The Personnel Office develops, coordinates and directs all statewide personnel management programs and activities in the following major areas: workforce analysis and planning; recruitment, selection and placement; classification and pay; performance evaluation; benefits and services; personnel transactions; leave administration and records; employee career development, and retirement counseling. This office provides appropriate training in these





**FISCAL YEAR 1986-87** was one of great anticipation and excitement for the agency as we watched our new Harrisburg headquarters complex grow from a dream to reality.

areas for all units located centrally and throughout field operations. All must be developed and coordinated in total accord with agency policy, civil service law, commonwealth personnel rules, and collective bargaining agreements.

Current operations involve approximately 650 permanent and 70 seasonal employees in 110 different position classifications. Of this number, approximately 115 positions are located in the Harrisburg headquarters and the remainder are situated at various field locations and operations in all 67 counties.

A formal comprehensive Affirmative Action Program exists to ensure equal opportunity for all employees and applicants by developing, implementing, reviewing and coordinating equal employment opportunity regulations.

The Personnel Office is continually reviewing our complement to determine manpower needs, and our continuing policy is to fill only those positions absolutely necessary to the operations of the agency.

### Hunting License Division

This division appoints and supervises approximately 1100 issuing agents comprised of county treasurers and private businesses. Monthly reports are received and audited with accompanying revenue (\$23,015,543.50) deposited into the Game Fund. The License Division oversees these agents to ensure compliance with Game Commission regulations and policies.

The Harrisburg License Division issues licenses by mail and over the counter.

Selected agencies at key locations in Ohio and New Jersey have been appointed and continue to service our nonresident hunters.

The following licenses were issued for the 1986 license year:

|                             | 1986-1987* |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Adult Resident              | 911,147    |
| Junior Resident             | 124,543    |
| Senior Resident             | 64,326     |
| Nonresident Adult           | 60,776     |
| Nonresident Junior          | 2,426      |
| Nonresident 5-Day           | 2,175      |
| Archery                     | 246,099    |
| Muzzleloader                | 79,182     |
| Antlerless Deer             | 524,299    |
| Three-Day Regulated         |            |
| Shooting Grounds            | 2,410      |
| Adult Resident Furtaker     | 33,690     |
| Junior Resident Furtaker    | 6,258      |
| Senior Resident Furtaker    | 2,530      |
| Nonresident Adult Furtaker  | 62         |
| Nonresident Junior Furtaker | 1          |
| Resident Bear               | 93,237     |
| Nonresident Bear            | 1,463      |
| Senior Lifetime             | 1,378      |

\* Sales through June 30, 1987

### Automotive and Procurement Division

Major responsibilities of this division are: the administration and coordination of statewide procurement activities; the administration of statewide automotive fleet management activities, including loss-accident reporting and control; the maintenance and operation of an advancement account for the expedient payment of vendor invoices under \$1,500 for goods and services received by the Harrisburg headquarters and satellite sections. Other division responsibilities include coordination of statewide surplus property disposition and administration of the agency contract compliance program.



## BUREAU OF GAME MANAGEMENT

Dale E. Sheffer

Director

The Bureau of Game Management has two divisions employing approximately 75 full- and part-time personnel. There are 12 wildlife biologists and six wildlife technicians within the Division of Research. Within the Division of Propagation, five game farms are engaged in the rearing of ring-necked pheasants.

The Research Division is involved with 68 wildlife studies, surveys and inventories, the results of which produce management recommendations. Wildlife research is overseen by a field coordinator. Research on the following are underway:

White-tailed Deer  
Ruffed Grouse  
Wild Turkey  
Ring-necked Pheasant  
Waterfowl  
Small Game Harvests  
Nongame  
Bobcat  
River Otter  
Purple Martin  
Bobwhite Quail  
Black Bear  
Fox Squirrel  
Cottontail Rabbit  
Snowshoe Hare  
Osprey  
Bald Eagle  
Furbearing Mammals  
Indiana Bat  
Hungarian Partridge  
Coyote

Study objectives and procedures are prepared by the wildlife biologists for review and approval by the bureau director. Annual progress and final reports are also subject to approval prior to dissemination to other scientists and the general public.

Production of ring-necked pheasants at the five game farms is supervised by a field coordinator. He also handles the distribution of pheasants throughout the Commonwealth. In addition, he is responsible for budget preparation and bulk purchases for each farm.

In 1986, 231,343 ring-necked pheasants were raised and released. The following surplus items were made available to sportsmen and commercial game bird propagators:

43,520 fertile eggs at 20 cents each  
36,050 day old chicks at 30 cents each  
7,754 day old chicks were given to sportsmen

The Research and Propagation coordinators assist with administrative duties in the Harrisburg headquarters office. These duties annually involve nearly 5000 written and telephone inquiries concerning wildlife research and management. Approximately 100,000 forms are prepared, distributed, received and

### Office Services Division

This division is responsible for the ordering, stocking and distribution of all clerical, paper supplies, and commonwealth forms used by the Harrisburg office, six region offices, five game farms, Howard Nursery, and the Ross Leffler School of Conservation. All Harrisburg duplicating requests are processed through this office, which also compiles statistics for the annual updating of the Data Book. All incoming mail is sorted and distributed by this division. The processing of all outgoing mail to Region Offices, Game Commission field personnel, news media, license issuing agents, sportsmen's clubs and the general public, as well as the maintaining of the mailing lists, is handled here. Messenger service, warehouse storage and distribution are maintained by this division.

### Labor Relations Division

Labor relations responsibilities are comprehensive, involving a master contract, a master memorandum, and approximately 11 different employee unit agreements, negotiations, labor/management meetings, management training, handling of grievances and arbitration.

### Game Commission Training Division

The agency's training facility at Brockway was officially closed in August 1986. That facility had been used for 50 years for training new employees in all aspects of wildlife conservation. During that time, 19 classes of conservation officers, totaling 427 individuals, were graduated and assigned to field positions. Our intensive wildlife conservation officer training program will continue at our new headquarters complex in Harrisburg. As in the past, the curriculum will be composed of classroom instruction augmented by on-the-job training with experienced officers. The new training facility will also be used for service workshops and other in-house training programs for all levels of Game Commission employees.



compiled each year. Wildlife and harvest management recommendations are made annually to the Game Commission.

## BUREAU OF INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

Lantz A. Hoffman

Director

A review of our 1986-87 operations indicates we achieved our objectives and have been able to effectively respond to ever increasing demands from hunters, trappers, and other outdoor enthusiasts whose voracious appetites for wildlife information and education programs are almost insatiable.

This bureau continues to administer and upgrade programs that have been in place for years and tackle new initiatives as needs arise.

We have reason to be encouraged by the success of Project WILD and the new comprehensive 10 hour hunter-trapper education program which is directly coupled to continued overall reductions in numbers of hunting related accidents.

We're delighted to see increased enrollments in our Northeast Region hunter education camps, and ever growing involvement of young people in Commission-sponsored shooting sports and outdoor skills competitions.

The Commission's voluntary Waterfowl Management Stamp and Print Program again provided additional monies to acquire critical wetlands and create new waterfowl habitat. Our Working Together for Wildlife program, augmented by income tax checkoff monies from the Wild Resource Conservation Fund, continued to support important nongame research and reintroduction projects.

After several years of dedicated efforts by many people we've gained long sought acceptance and understanding of Pennsylvania's deer management program. Informed consent seldom is attained without exceptional effort and sacrifice on the part of many. It's been a long uphill challenge, but well worth the effort put forth by bureau personnel.

In all of our undertakings, we are deeply indebted to our wildlife conservation officers and their deputies, hunter-trapper education instructors, Project WILD facilitators and teachers, outdoor writers and editors, and hundreds of other dedicated individuals who give so much of their time and talent to make the Commission's I & E efforts successful, month after month, year after year. To all of you, from all of us in the Bureau of Information and Education, our sincere thanks for a job well done.

### Working Together for Wildlife

Fifteen Pennsylvania artists submitted entries for the 1988 Working Together for Wildlife fine art print competition. The species selected for this year's program is the snowy egret and the winning design is featured on this month's



**THE SELECTION of Pennsylvania's voluntary waterfowl management stamp continues to be a popular feature of the annual Pymatuning Waterfowl Expo.**

GAME NEWS cover. The sale of the fine art prints and patches continues to generate additional revenues to finance the Commission's nongame wildlife programs. "Snowy Egret" fine art prints will soon be available to wildlife art collectors. Last year's "Autumn Challenge" print and 1986's "Country Lane Kestrel" are also available for purchase.

### Nontoxic Shot Education Program

In conjunction with the nontoxic shot requirements that take effect this year, the I & E Bureau has developed a comprehensive program to help waterfowl hunters make the transition from lead to steel shot. Selected personnel from each region have received training so they can present this program in their respective areas, and numerous handouts have been prepared specifically for attendees. The program, which requires at least two hours to present, covers the lead poisoning problem and the use of steel shot to alleviate it. The latest information on steel shot ballistics, choke selection, shot size selection, reloading information and methods of developing proficiency with steel shot is provided.

### Waterfowl Management Stamp and Print Program

The Commission's 1987 voluntary duck stamp, featuring a pair of pintails, was designed by Rob Leslie from Turnersville, New Jersey. The painting was selected from 73 entries submitted by wildlife artists from 28 states. Both the 1987 and 1986 stamps are available for purchase from Game Commission offices and participating hunting license agents and stamp dealers. Revenues from the sale of waterfowl management stamps and prints are used for waterfowl management projects within the commonwealth.

### Planting for Wildlife

Thousands of Pennsylvanians get involved



**GAME COMMISSION** exhibits at shows and fairs are an invaluable means of meeting outdoorsmen and explaining the many facets of the agency.

with establishing habitat for wildlife through the Commission's Planting for Wildlife program. Seedling packets were sold at numerous locations throughout the state during April and May. A similar sale will be conducted this spring with sale locations being listed in an upcoming issue of *GAME NEWS*.

### **Project Wild**

Project WILD continues to be enthusiastically supported by educators throughout the state. Volunteer facilitators have offered numerous workshops during the year, and over 80 percent of the participants indicated the workshop was one of the best they have ever attended. The Commission sincerely appreciates the efforts these dedicated volunteers provide by conducting top quality Project WILD workshops.

### **Pennsylvania Envirolympics**

The Commission has been actively involved with the Pennsylvania Envirolympics program on both the county and state levels. Many wildlife conservation officers in cooperation with county conservation districts, other state agencies, and the Soil Conservation Service, have provided assistance in organizing and conducting these events.

### **Public Information Division**

Several years ago the bureau developed an educational program to explain Pennsylvania's deer management program to hunters and other interested laypersons. Since then, this nontechnical presentation has been presented countless times throughout the state by field officers and information and education supervisors. Although the educational effort is not solely responsible, from the dramatic decrease in the number of questions and complaints, it's obvious that understanding and acceptance of our deer management procedures has grown.

To further promote public confidence in the

agency's deer management goals and practices, the bureau last year began publicizing deer management statistics that more precisely represent the extent of deer harvests. These figures, the actual deer harvests calculated by wildlife managers, are nearly double the "reported" figures used by the agency since 1915. The "new" figures have required a determined effort by the bureau to make all numbers meaningful and understandable.

Bureau news releases continue to keep the public informed about agency plans, programs, personnel and activities at local, regional and statewide levels. As government becomes more complicated, more information must reach citizens before decisions are made, while activities are underway, and when the results of our efforts can be measured and judged.

Communication with the huge number of Pennsylvanians and nonresidents interested in wildlife requires the use of mass media. Interest in the outdoors continues to escalate, and news media personnel—being sensitive to their publics—are increasing their demands on the agency for information, materials, background, and current data, as well as projections for the future. Being in a highly competitive field, members of the news media at times ask us for predictions before research projects are complete and evaluated. We, therefore, must exhibit discretion to avoid public confusion and disbelief in those instances when expectations differ from final conclusions and decisions.

Just as all agency bureaus are dealing with increased correspondence, information requests to the Public Information Division continue to mount. As new publications appear on the scene and the broadcast medium expands, their personnel rely heavily on this division for wildlife management data, usually requiring considerable expenditures of time and research. Game Commission publications which are compilations of extensive agency data are declining in number due to financial restraints and limited personnel.

### **Hunter-Trapper Education Division**

During the past year Pennsylvania's corps of 3409 volunteer hunter-trapper education instructors contributed over 10,000 hours of their time in classrooms, on ranges, and setting up and conducting simulated field experiences for new sportsmen. Most of the 39,966 students who attended one of the 897 classes were youngsters 11 to 14 years of age who were planning to go hunting for the first time.

Each of the six regions conducted formal



training classes for their new instructors, and 31 refresher seminars and workshops were held to update veteran instructors on teaching techniques, training aids, and program procedure changes. Harrisburg headquarters and regional hunter-trapper education staff participated in several workshops conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

A new approach to hunter-trapper education was implemented in Centre County where, instead of holding many small courses in communities, a few large countywide courses were held. This successful approach was outlined in the July 1987 GAME NEWS.

The Northeast Region again conducted three hunter-trapper education camps in the Poconos. That region's personnel also directed the state's youth hunter education championship. A junior team from Berks County and a senior team from Erie County took top honors, which qualified them for the national championship held in Utah.

The Commission's ethics program, SPORT (Sportsmen Policing Our Ranks Together) is still very much alive after 10 years of operation. During the past year SPORT Ethics Awards were conferred upon 61 individuals in recognition of their contributions toward improving the image of hunting and trapping.

### **GAME NEWS and Paid Publications Division**

GAME NEWS is the official publication of the Pennsylvania Game Commission and therefore the primary voice of the agency. With an average monthly circulation last year of some 166,000, it is the most widely read outdoor publication in the state.

Each month, almost 20,000 copies of GAME NEWS go to Farm-Game cooperators and 9000 to Safety Zone Cooperators. In return, these landowners keep their farms open to public hunting. Over 6000 copies are sent to school libraries so students may learn about wildlife, conservation and the role of hunting and fur-taking in game management. GAME NEWS distribution is not restricted to Pennsylvania. Approximately 23,000 copies go to subscribers in other states and several dozen foreign countries.

The basic purpose of the magazine is to make sportsmen aware of various programs carried out by the Game Commission. Therefore, numerous articles by wildlife biologists and other Commission personnel are published annually. Of a less official nature are the freelance stories and articles which give first-person accounts of hunting, trapping, and other activities of interest to Pennsylvania sportsmen. In addition to freelance material, there are regular columns for outdoor enthusiasts. If we are missing anything that interests you, drop us a line.

Other popular paid publications produced by the division and currently available include Ned Smith's *Gone for the Day*; Jim and Lillian

**Subscribe to**

## **GAME NEWS**

**For a Friend . . .**

Wakeley's *Birds of Pennsylvania*; Chuck Fergus's collection of Thornapples columns, *The Wingless Crow*; *Mammals of Pennsylvania*; and the *Pennsylvania Game Cookbook*.

### **BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

**Jacob I. Sitlinger**

The Bureau of Land Management was able to achieve many of its program objectives this year. The 1987 portion of our Bald Eagle Recovery effort culminated in the release of 14 bald eagles. The eagles were released one week earlier than in past years in order to evaluate the possibility of the birds staying around the hacking towers longer. These eagles were captured in Saskatchewan during the last week of June, brought to Pennsylvania, and placed in hacking towers in Pike and Dauphin counties. This brings to 62 the total number of eagles released into the skies of Pennsylvania. We were able to obtain two eagles in addition to our normal allotment of 12 because a nest had been destroyed by a forest fire. Fortunately, province officials managed to save the eaglets. Next year the program should reach fruition with the return and successful nesting of some of the birds released during the project's early years.

The Conservation Reserve Program was brought about by passage of the Food Security Act of 1985. The program's fifth annual sign-up has been completed, with 348 farms totaling 13,127 acres. These farms will be added to the 916 farms (33,245 acres) acquired in the four previous sign-up periods. Total acreage nationwide for the Conservation Reserve Program now stands at 22,996,000. The Commission has actively pursued owner contacts so that wildlife will benefit from these conservation measures.

As an update of statistical information, the Bureau of Land Management is responsible for the development and maintenance of 1,304,082 acres on 276 Game Lands in 65 counties. All of these lands are managed for the enhancement of wildlife as well as for outdoor activities such as hunting, hiking, outdoor photography and bird watching.

### **Engineering and Contract Management Division**

This division is responsible for planning, de-

signing, specifying, contracting for, and inspection of all contracted maintenance work and new construction. In addition, the division provides technical assistance on problems involving general engineering and it prepares feasibility reports and cost estimates for a variety of proposed projects.

This past fiscal year, 11 repair, maintenance and building-addition contracts were awarded to preserve or enhance structures on Game Lands. Included in these were two building additions to accommodate Unit Headquarters facilities.

Several dams were visually inspected and formal reports were submitted to the Department of Environmental Resources.

Assistance was provided to the Bureau during the ongoing construction phase of the Harrisburg headquarters office, training and warehouse facility, as well as the Pennsylvania Conservation Corps (PCC) projects to construct landscape structures and a grounds maintenance building.

## Federal Aid and Public Access Division

The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (Pittman-Robertson Act) celebrated 50 years of success in providing reimbursements for funds expended for wildlife management projects. The monies, administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, are derived from excise taxes on sporting arms, ammunition and archery equipment. These funds are then returned to the states for projects that benefit wildlife. During the 1986-87 fiscal year, we received \$4,629,794 as reimbursement from this Act.

The Endangered Species Act provided \$27,000 that were expended primarily on our Bald Eagle Recovery Project.

## Public Access Programs

The Game Commission's public access programs continue to provide an increase of hunter access to private lands. The oldest, the Cooperative Farm Game Program, begun in 1936, has 184 projects in 58 counties; 20,849 cooperating landowners keep over 2,425,700 acres open to hunting. We also now have 9129 cooperators covering over 1,460,000 acres in our Safety Zone Program. Many recreational opportunities were enjoyed by sportsmen on those lands. The Forest Game Cooperative Program now has over 615,147 acres and is keeping lands in essentially big game areas open to outdoorsmen while helping to protect the landowner against unsportsmenlike acts.

These programs do not give hunters unlimited access to these private lands. Hunters should still contact cooperating landowners for permission and, out of courtesy, let them know who is on their properties.

The Commission has agreed to continue to provide 10-pound mixed seed packets to landowners who have the time and areas to plant them. The seed mixture of dwarf sorghum, mil-

let, buckwheat and sunflowers provides a good source of food for all wildlife, and if properly located on the farm, can provide relief from depredation upon field crops. It is expected that this seed mixture will be provided free of charge to cooperators and for sale to the public.

## Federal-State Coordination Division

The Game Commission has an ongoing program with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to license lands associated with flood control projects for wildlife management purposes. Prior to 1987, the Commission had license agreements for 10 Corps projects located throughout the commonwealth which provided 23,280 acres of land for wildlife habitat improvement projects and public hunting. That acreage was increased with the signing of a license agreement to manage 582 acres of land associated with Woodcock Creek Lake in Crawford County. Licensed lands are characterized by low lying wetlands, reverting farm fields, open agricultural fields, and forested areas. These lands will afford excellent opportunities for both consumptive and nonconsumptive uses.

The Commission continues to afford the Pennsylvania National Guard the opportunity to utilize State Game Lands for training exercises during the Guard's annual training period. In June 1987, the Pennsylvania Army National Guard 876th Engineer Battalion accomplished projects on eight State Game Lands. Projects included constructing bridges, breaching a deteriorated dam, airlifting a storage building to a new location, demolition of a concrete building, closing an abandoned sonar testing site, and expanding wildlife herbaceous openings. Both agencies realize benefits from this cooperative program: needed Commission projects are completed with substantial financial savings, and the Guard benefits from realistic training under field conditions. The Commission intends to continue this program.

## Game Land Planning & Development Division

During the past fiscal year, 1386 acres of herbaceous openings were planted to small grain and grass legume combinations by Food and Cover Corps personnel. All planted grain was left standing for wildlife. An additional 13,985 acres were maintained by mowing. Other treatments included liming 1179 acres and the application of fertilizer on 1563 acres. Winter cuttings of woodland borders totaled 852 acres, and 12,311 fruit producing trees were pruned. New construction included 24 miles of road, 18 parking areas, 595 nesting structures, and 1175 bird houses. Maintenance included 2253 miles of roads, 8287 parking areas, and 1279 miles of boundary lines. Sharecropping activity on Game Lands continues to play an important role in wildlife management. We received 16,999 bushels of ear corn and 22,086 bushels of shelled corn from



sharecroppers. This was in addition to the amount of grain left standing by sharecroppers for use by wildlife.

### **Forestry Division**

Commercial timber sales continue to be an important tool for creating habitat diversity on State Game Lands. During the year, 10,498 acres were cut.

Timber sales yielded \$4,258,708 for the Game Fund, a decrease of \$125,925 from the previous year's receipts. Average return was \$455 per acre, a decrease of \$49 per acre. Various private and local economies were stimulated by the receipt of more than 32 million board feet of sawlogs and 193,000 tons of pulpwood from State Game Lands during the year, while habitat for wildlife was improved through timbering.

### **Real Estate Division**

During the past fiscal year, an additional 7188 acres of State Game Lands were acquired in 14 counties at a cost of \$1,856,671. Several land exchanges contributed to this figure. The total of all Miscellaneous Operational Facility lands, such as the Game Farms, remains at 3226 acres, purchased at a cost of \$314,046. Total area of all Game Commission holdings is now 1,304,082 acres in 276 separate Game Lands in 65 counties.

### **Payments in Lieu of Taxes**

Local governmental bodies received 60 cents per acre in-lieu-of taxes, as required by Act 20 of 1984. During the past fiscal year, \$782,449 was divided in proportional payments to the county, school district and township where such lands are located.

### **Environmental Impact Assessment and Minerals Division Mineral Resource Recovery and Management Program**

Among the agency's responsibilities in managing Game Lands is management of the mineral resources underlying them. In many instances minerals underneath Game Lands are owned by individuals or companies. When these owners arrange to have the minerals extracted, it's up to this division to ensure that surface impacts are minimized during the process.

This division is also responsible for the administration of agency owned coal, oil and gas rights. Approximately 56,000 acres of Game Lands are leased for oil and natural gas development. Of the 38 active oil and gas leases on Game Lands, 13 have experienced active drilling to date. The Commission also leases surface mining rights for coal removal. Currently, two approved mining-reclamation operations are active on Game Lands. One of the projects



was designed to include the reclamation of 200 acres of previously abandoned mined land. A third, approved by the Commission in January 1987, is designed to eliminate an acid mine discharge to a wild trout stream and involves the exchange of coal rights on 60 acres for 7354 acres which will be transferred to the agency.

### **Wildlife Impact Assessment Program**

The Wildlife Impact Assessment Section within this division is involved in a cooperative federal-state program aimed at identifying and attempting to reduce unnecessary losses to wildlife resulting from major construction projects such as the Interstate Highway Program, flood control impoundments, and other activities that require federal or state approval. Applicants for major construction permits, as well as those involving similar but smaller scale activities, are required to demonstrate that their projects have been designed and located in a way that will reduce, so far as possible, adverse impacts to the environment. The Game Commission reviews these applications to ensure that all significant adverse wildlife impacts have been identified and that the proper steps are taken to reduce habitat losses to an acceptable minimum. Minimizing losses of valuable wildlife habitat through early coordination and better project planning continues to be the primary goal of the Commission's impact review efforts.

From July 1, 1986, through June 30, 1987, 42 major construction projects requiring federal-state coordination and agency review were processed by this section. These projects primarily dealt with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' flood control program, and construction by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation for the interstate highway network. Another 177 applications involving permits for solid waste disposal areas, stream encroachments from such things as road relocations, utility corridor crossings, stream-channel relocations, and dam or levy construction, were all reviewed and commented on. Among our foremost interests in this program is the protection of valuable wetland resources and the avoidance of impacts to endangered or threatened wildlife.

Surface mining activities in the common-



**MODERN EQUIPMENT** is becoming increasingly important for developing wildlife habitat. Such machinery enables land managers to develop and maintain habitat to an extent never before imagined.

quests for wildlife data were received and processed.

Program thrusts for wildlife database programs during the year continued to focus on species profile updates. Special funding received from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and the Pennsylvania Coastal Zone Management Program was used to initiate a comprehensive update of natural history, habitat, and management information for over 600 species of birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and fish, and to update distribution information for approximately 400 priority species occurring in the commonwealth. This updating is expected to be completed by mid-1988.

### Howard Nursery

The Howard Nursery provided 4,169,259 tree and shrub seedlings for wildlife habitat improvements on State Game Lands and other public and private lands open to public hunting. The Planting for Wildlife Program continues to be popular. In this fiscal year, 252,000 tree and shrub seedlings were sold to persons interested in providing food and cover for wildlife.

The nursery is growing 37 species of tree and shrub seedlings, including many native food producing varieties.

The wood shop, which is located at the nursery, is where all the wooden information signs used on State Game Lands and public access properties are manufactured.

## BUREAU OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

J. R. Fagan  
Director

The Bureau of Law Enforcement is charged with administering the state's wildlife law enforcement programs. The program responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the apprehension and prosecution of Game Law violators; the investigation of hunting accidents and follow-up procedures through the judicial system when necessary; planning, conducting and finding facts through the administrative hearing process as it relates to the loss of hunting privileges; investigating and executing deer and bear deterrent fencing, as well as monitoring installation; investigating, processing and issuing special permits that relate to wildlife; coordinating the maintenance and updating of the agency's statewide two-way radio communications system; and developing and implementing training programs for wildlife conservation officers and deputies.

wealth annually involve thousands of acres of forested wildlife habitat. The Commission's field officers, by means of a formal agreement between the Commission and the Department of Environmental Resources, review surface mine permit applications to ensure the wildlife protection provisions of the commonwealth's mining laws and regulations are being fulfilled by the industry. The reclamation of strip mined areas so they become suitable wildlife habitat continues to be a primary goal of the program. During this fiscal year, 337 surface mine permit applications encompassing approximately 30,000 acres of land were reviewed and commented on.

### Wildlife Planning Division

The Wildlife Planning Division has primary responsibility for coordinating the development of a long-range management plan covering all agency operations. This includes coordinating and facilitating the identification of agency goals, objectives and programs, and the development of strategic and operational plans and program evaluation procedures. This division also is responsible for coordinating the development and enhancement of wildlife databases to better support species planning and management programs. Program planning activities this fiscal year focused on the development of an agency draft strategic plan for the management of Pennsylvania's wildlife resources. Planning documents were developed by Game Commission staff to define species and other program areas to be included in the planning effort. Initial drafts of specific program plans were initiated late in the fiscal year.

The development and enhancement of wildlife database systems continued as a major thrust of operations this past year. The Pennsylvania Fish and Wildlife Data Base Program continued to function as a vital source of information for wildlife planning and impact assessment. This program was supported and used by other state agencies and federal agencies. Additionally, 75 environmental consultant re-



**CHECKING LICENSES**, although maybe the most familiar, is just one of the many duties required of wildlife conservation officers. Wildlife law enforcement is a year-round job that requires knowledge and expertise in many fields.

Throughout the year the law enforcement staff is involved in the development and review of required amendments to the Game Law and the enactment of related rules and regulations. A close liaison with the General Assembly, other bureaus, the field regions and personnel produces a very cooperative atmosphere in which legislation necessary to help protect the wildlife resources of Pennsylvania is provided.

During this past year, workshops were conducted by the Bureau of Law Enforcement to update and familiarize all field officers with the new Game and Wildlife Code and the rules and regulations set forth in Title 58. The regions, in turn, conducted the same type of training for all deputy wildlife conservation officers so they too would be familiar with the changes in the new law.

The Director of the Bureau of Law Enforcement, G. D. Kirkpatrick, retired during this past year and was replaced by J. R. Fagan, former director of the Northeast Region.

### Special Permits

The Technical Services Division, along with regional office staffs and field officers, processed over 4900 special permits. These permits fall into a variety of categories and require a great amount of administrative involvement from the Harrisburg, region and district levels.

With the advent of the computer, the bureau's permit system has been modernized, expediting the processing of renewals, mailings and the maintenance of special lists. Special permits issued by the Bureau provide many individuals and groups with opportunities to pursue a livelihood, enjoy the out-of-doors, and educate others.

### Firearms Sales

Each year the Game Commission confiscates a variety of firearms used illegally in violation of the Game Law. To dispose of these firearms, the Bureau of Law Enforcement conducts an auction. At the 1986 auction 93 firearms were placed on the auction block. All but one firearm was sold, resulting in over \$12,000 for the Game Fund.

### Deputy Game Protectors

The Pennsylvania Game Commission is blessed with approximately 1000 men and women, from all walks of life, serving voluntarily as deputy game protectors. These people assist field officers with a wide variety of duties and responsibilities. With an assigned area of approximately 335 square miles per district, and literally thousands of people per district,



the job of wildlife law enforcement is too large for one person to administer.

Throughout the years the agency has been able to train this volunteer group to be professionals in the wildlife management field. Training is done at district and region levels so these officers receive a comprehensive understanding of law enforcement, legal procedures, wildlife management concepts, public relations, unarmed self-defense, firearms use and a host of other related agency programs.

The Game Commission, sportsmen, and the general public are fortunate to have such a core of dedicated individuals willing to give of their time and talent to perform these duties.

### Fur Auction

Over the course of a year agency officers come into possession of a variety of wildlife. Many of these specimens are road kills, some are taken unlawfully, while others die of accidents and natural causes. Rather than let these animals go to waste, we make these specimens available to the public at an auction.

All of the furs, as well as deer antlers and bear claws, are sold. This sale gives taxidermists and fur dealers, as well as average persons, an opportunity to obtain specimens of many different kinds of wildlife that are otherwise illegal to buy.

The auction is well publicized and well attended, and provides another valuable way for Game Commission personnel to meet the general public.

This was the third year for the auction, and the specimens brought over \$17,800 in revenue.

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## **Bear Damage**

Officers were busy checking out claims of bear damage to beehives and livestock during the fiscal year. Field personnel expended over 1500 hours investigating 567 bear incidents. As a result, 48 bears were trapped, marked and moved to other locations.

A tabulation of the reports submitted for claims indicates that 546 beehives and 156 pieces of livestock were destroyed by bears. Where damage was inflicted, electric fencing was made available to the landowner to preclude additional losses. This type of deterrent has been successful and will continue to be used to help protect bee colonies and livestock.

## **Game Law Enforcement**

Professionalism and excellence aptly describe the outstanding job our officers do in enforcing the Game Laws. Case files show that 10,067 violations were adjudicated through the field acknowledgment of guilt or by citations filed before magistrates. Fines collected from these cases amounted to \$622,017.

Additionally, officers issued 9837 warnings. Warnings are either verbal or written, and serve a useful law enforcement purpose.

The Pennsylvania Game Commission has, through its field officers—salaried and deputies alike—maintained a proud tradition as one of the finest agencies in the United States. Our officers are trained, knowledgeable and compassionate, and they use good judgment in the performance of their duties.

## **BUREAU OF MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS**

**Lyle M. Koons, Jr.**

**Director**

After the installation of our new computer system, we converted our computer programs to run in the new environment. Bureau technicians also established new security procedures for access to the computer, certified a new data communications software package, implemented a new program scheduling process, reorganized data elements into new data base structures, evaluated and installed a new data entry product, evaluated a different data dictionary, documented all of the changes made necessary by the migration to the new

environment, and trained affected agency personnel to use the new machine.

The bureau also established a modern tape library system, developed plans for and supervised the installation of a new data communications network in our new headquarters, established new operating procedures, put in place a standard maintenance policy for EDP equipment, achieved a reciprocal disaster recovery agreement and modified the EDP disaster plan, established procedures for reporting fixed assets in accordance with GAAP policy requirements, investigated new methods of data exchange with other governments, published a multi-year planning document, and recruited necessary personnel.

The Game Law recodification required dramatic changes to the license issuing agent system, the special permittee system, prosecution tracking system, fine balance time payment system, and the hunting license revocation system.

With changes to deer management philosophy under investigation, the bureau has had to modify the deer harvest reporting and age data to accommodate both township and possible new management unit requirements. The bonus deer policy in special regulations areas required additional programming changes. We also accommodated new requirements in black bear management, small game surveys, unit supervisor and headquarters data, and overtime reporting information.

We accomplished these changes while maintaining the electronic file of over 707,000 records of all types. We used more than 300 computer programs to process approximately 760,000 transactions in 1987.

In the microcomputer area, we developed a policy and standards for agency microcomputer and software acquisitions. Using an industry standard (MS/DOS) philosophy, we selected a standard word processor, spreadsheet, and data base product for micros, evaluated three accounts payable packages and wrote one for use in the agency, evaluated statistical software packages, provided custom support for microcomputer applications, established a microcomputer users group, and encouraged the use of liaison personnel. Microcomputer use will continue to provide low cost solutions to challenging problems. We are encouraged by the positive environment and potential for the future.

Some of the proposed new program development work is getting underway after being delayed by the computer installation. We have a backlog of programming requests to accomplish in deer management, asset accounting, game take survey, black bear management, mailroom distribution, upland wildlife census, fur sales, licensing, labor relations, and cost accounting activity.

We need to keep abreast of changing technology on a daily basis so that we can continue to provide more and better information for management of the wildlife resource.



# PGC FINANCIAL REPORT

July 1, 1986 to June 30, 1987

## Game Fund

The Balance Sheet and the Statement of Unreserved Fund Balance were prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). The unreserved/undesignated balance in the Game Fund on June 30, 1987, computed on a GAAP basis, was \$23,975,895, an increase of \$5,804,241. This increase is due primarily to reclassifying \$3,063,114 applicable to the acquisition of game lands from the reserve for encumbrances to unreserved/undesignated fund balance. These funds were encumbered on June 30, 1987, but liquidated and lapsed subsequent to that date. Total assets reported by the Game Commission as of June 30, 1987, were \$58,620,006. The fixed assets are reported for the first time on the Balance Sheet for fiscal year 1986-87, and a schedule of fixed assets is included with this year's statements. Fixed assets are reported at cost or estimated historical cost; no depreciation is provided. Donated fixed assets are recorded at fair market value at the time of donation.

All other schedules included in this report were prepared on a cash basis combined with an encumbrance budgetary system, and as such are consistent with that of the previous year.

Actual revenue credited to the Game Fund during the 1986-87 fiscal year was \$38,719,798, an increase of \$869,653 or 2 percent over last year's actual cash receipts. The most significant revenue increase was federal funds, which were up \$774,166, or 19.8 percent compared to fiscal year 1985-86. Another factor contributing to the increase involved the increased sales of junior and adult nonresident hunting licenses. The number of nonresident junior licenses sold increased 345 or 17 percent; adult nonresident licenses increased 4500 or 8 percent for a total dollar increase of \$362,953. Offsetting these increases were decreases in interest on securities of \$411,018 and reimbursement from the Pennsylvania Conservation Corps Program of \$397,634.

Actual expenditures and commitments for current executive authorization totaled

\$41,356,332, an increase of \$421,263 over last year. The major increases to expenditures were printing and advertising, up \$504,605; land purchases and acquisition costs, up \$449,610; legal appraisal and consulting fees, up \$209,375; salaries and wages, up \$211,674. Offsetting these increases were decreases in the following: state share retirement benefits, down \$708,701 due to the retirement percentage decreasing from 17.61 percent in fiscal year 1985-86 to 12.78 percent in fiscal year 1986-87; electronic data processing contractual services, rentals and purchases, down \$626,318; automotive repairs, supplies and rentals, down \$192,281; travel and special conference expenses, down \$105,245.

## Acts 271 and 42

Act 271 of the Game Law provides that not less than \$1.25 from each resident hunter's paid license fee shall be used solely for the selection, restoration, rehabilitation and improvement of lands available for public hunting, to provide and improve habitat for the purpose of producing natural propagation of wildlife. The number of resident licenses sold during the 1986-87 fiscal year totaled 1,101,394. This mandated that a minimum of \$1,376,743 be expended for above mentioned purposes. The agency actually expended \$2,619,623 and committed \$207,970 during the fiscal year for this purpose, for a total of \$2,827,593, an excess of \$1,450,850 over the Act's requirement.

Act 42 of the Game Law states that \$2 of each fee collected for issuing antlerless deer licenses shall be used solely for cutting or otherwise removing overshadowing tree growth, to produce underbrush sprouts and saplings for deer food and cover on game lands. Antlerless deer license sales for the 1986-87 fiscal year totaled 524,299. This mandated that a minimum of \$1,048,598 be expended for the above mentioned purposes. The agency actually expended \$1,390,421 and committed \$11,006 during the fiscal year for this purpose, for a total of \$1,401,427, an excess of \$352,829 over the Act's requirement.

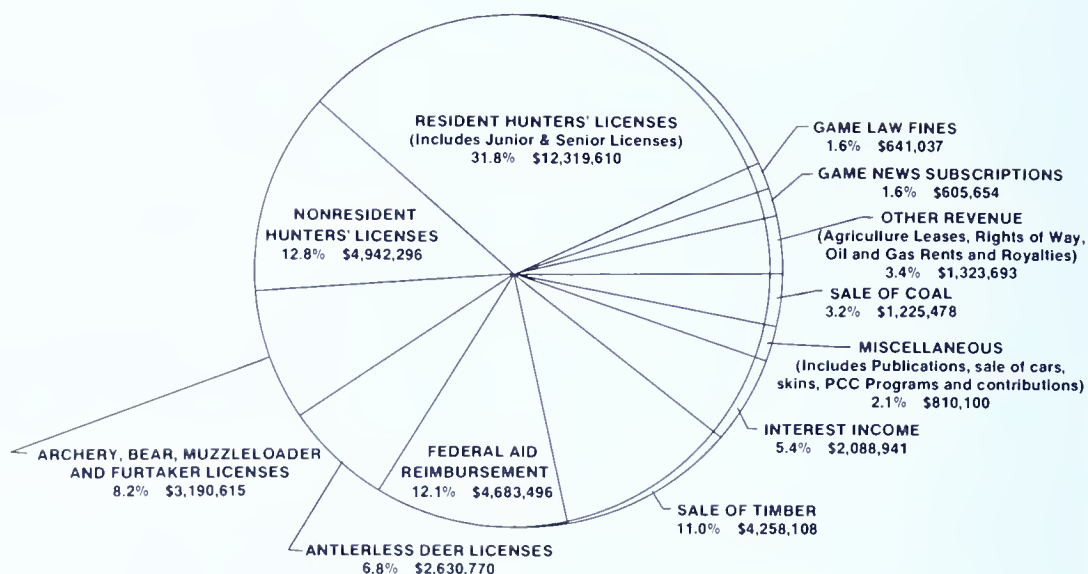
## GAME FUND BALANCE SHEET, JUNE 30, 1987

### ASSETS

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Cash with Treasurer .....              | \$ 3,078   |
| Cash in Transit .....                  | 10,531     |
| Cash-Advancement Accounts .....        | 208,401    |
| Temporary Investments .....            | 29,105,000 |
| Accrued Interest Receivable .....      | 155,230    |
| Due from Other Commonwealth Funds..... | 15,684     |

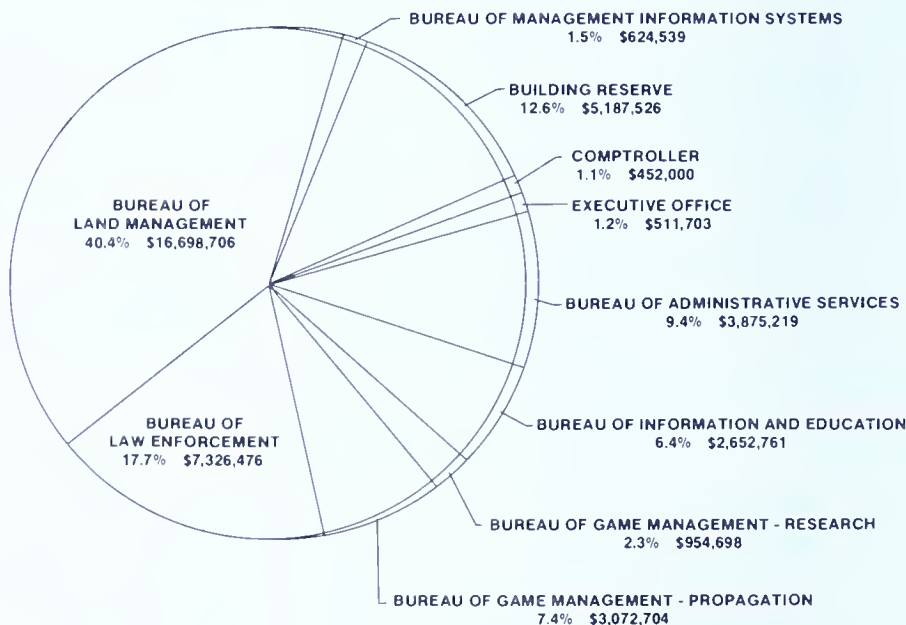


**GAME COMMISSION REVENUE**  
**\$38,719,798**  
**FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 1987**



(rounded to nearest dollar)

**GAME FUND EXPENDITURES & COMMITMENTS**  
**\$41,356,332**  
**FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 1987**



(rounded to nearest dollar)

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Grants Receivable-Federal Government .....     | 393,703      |
| Fixed Assets .....                             | 58,620,006   |
| Total Assets .....                             | \$88,511,633 |
| <b>LIABILITIES</b>                             |              |
| Vouchers Payable .....                         | \$ 70,226    |
| Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities ..... | 2,893,327    |
| Due to Other Commonwealth Funds .....          | 604,000      |
| Due to Other Governments .....                 | 40,333       |
| Total Liabilities .....                        | \$ 3,607,886 |
| <b>FUND EQUITY</b>                             |              |
| Reserved from Current Encumbrances .....       | \$ 2,297,319 |
| Reserve for Restricted Revenue .....           | 10,527       |
| Fund Balance Unreserved/Undesignated .....     | 23,975,895   |
| Investment in Fixed Assets .....               | 58,620,006   |
| Total Fund Equity .....                        | \$84,903,747 |
| Total Liabilities and Fund Equity .....        | \$88,511,633 |

**GAME FUND**  
**STATEMENT OF UNRESERVED FUND BALANCE**  
**FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 1987**

Fund Balance — Unreserved/Undesignated, June 30, 1986 . \$18,171,654

|   |                             |              |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Add:  | Actual Cash Receipts,       |              |
|   | July 1, 1986 through        |              |
|   | June 30, 1987 .....         | \$38,719,798 |
|   | Revenue earned as of        |              |
|   | 6/30/86 and deposited       |              |
|   | in 1986-87 .....            | ( 1,403,281) |
|   | Revenue earned but not      |              |
|   | received as of 6/30/87      |              |
|   | Licenses & Fees .....       | \$ 2,112     |
|   | Fines and Penalties .....   | 513          |
|   | Miscellaneous Revenue ..... | 7,816        |
|   | Interest on Short Term      |              |
|   | Investments .....           | 231,405      |
|   | Due from other Funds .....  | 15,684       |
|   | Due from Federal Gov't.     |              |
|   | (Grants) .....              | 393,703      |
|   | Total Revenue accrued       |              |
|   | but not received            |              |
|   | as of 6/30/87 .....         | 651,233      |
| Total Revenue Earned during 86-87 .....     |                             | 37,967,750   |
| Lapses from prior year appropriations ..... |                             | 6,464,445    |
| Unreserved-Undesignated Fund Balance        |                             |              |
| Before Commitments and Expenditures .....   |                             | \$62,603,849 |

|  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| Deduct: Current Year Expenditures and Commitments posted from 7/1/86 through 6/30/87 ..... | \$41,356,332        |
| Reversal of Commitment and Expenditure Accrual for 1985-86 .....                           | ( 87,161)           |
| Expenditure Accruals as of 6/30/87.....  | 3,341,664           |
| Commitments liquidated against 6/30/87 expenditure accruals .....                          | ( 5,982,881)        |
| Total Expenditures and Commitments incurred for fiscal year 1986-87 .....                  | <u>38,627,954</u>   |
| Fund Balance-Unreserved/Undesignated, 6/30/87 .....  | <u>\$23,975,895</u> |

**SCHEDULE OF ACTUAL REVENUE DEPOSITED IN GAME FUND  
FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 1987**

**LICENSES AND FEES**

|  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| Resident Hunting – Adult .....           | \$10,978,880        |
| Resident Hunting – Junior .....          | 623,763             |
| Resident Hunting – Senior .....          | 646,219             |
| Resident Lifetime Hunting – Senior ..... | 70,748              |
| Nonresident Hunting .....                | 4,844,342           |
| Nonresident Hunting – Junior .....       | 97,954              |
| Resident Bear .....                      | 932,890             |
| Nonresident Bear .....                   | 37,422              |
| Antlerless Deer .....                    | 2,630,770           |
| Archery .....                            | 1,222,464           |
| Muzzleloader Hunting Licenses .....      | 398,376             |
| 5-Day Nonresident Small Game .....       | 40,332              |
| 3-Day Regulated Shooting Ground .....    | 7,387               |
| Resident Furtaker License – Adult .....  | 401,756             |
| Resident Furtaker License – Junior ..... | 30,975              |
| Resident Furtaker License – Senior ..... | 24,493              |
| Nonresident Furtaker – Adult .....       | 5,924               |
| Nonresident Furtaker – Junior .....      | 120                 |
| Issuing Agents' Application Fee .....    | 18,613              |
| Special Game Licenses .....              | 69,863              |
| Rights-of-Ways .....                     | 281,625             |
| Total Licenses and Fees .....            | <u>\$23,364,916</u> |

**FINES AND PENALTIES**

|                      |            |
|----------------------|------------|
| Game Law Fines ..... | \$ 641,037 |
|----------------------|------------|

**MISCELLANEOUS REVENUE**

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Interest on Securities and Deposits .....                  | \$ 2,088,941 |
| Sale of Timber and Other Wood Products .....               | 4,258,108    |
| Sale of Coal .....   | 1,225,478    |
| Ground Rentals and Royalties from Oil and Gas Leases ..... | 922,770      |
| Sale of GAME NEWS .....                                    | 605,654      |



|   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| Wildlife Promotional Publications and Materials . . . . .   | 77,309                     |
| Working Together for Wildlife . . . . .   | 87,914                     |
| Waterfowl Management: Stamp Sales and Art Print<br>Royalties . . . . .  | 99,376                     |
| Sale of Skins and Guns . . . . .  | 71,187                     |
| Other (Donations, game land map sales, sale of<br>grain and hay, SPORT promotional publications,<br>sale of stone, sand, gravel, prior year<br>expenditure refunds) . . . . . | 222,773                    |
| Total Miscellaneous Revenue . . . . .   | \$ 9,659,510               |
| Total Nontax Revenue . . . . .  | \$33,665,463               |
| <b>AUGMENTATIONS:</b>   |                            |
| Federal Aid . . . . .   | \$ 4,683,496               |
| Sale of Vehicles . . . . .  | 146,675                    |
| Sharecropping & Agricultural Leases . . . . .   | 19,922                     |
| PA Conservation Corps . . . . .   | 158,742                    |
| Donations . . . . .   | 45,500                     |
| Total Augmentations . . . . .   | \$ 5,054,335               |
| <b>GRAND TOTAL OF ALL REVENUE IN GAME FUND . . . . .</b>  | <b><u>\$38,719,798</u></b> |

**SCHEDULE ACTUAL COMMITMENTS & EXPENDITURES  
BY ORGANIZATION**

Current Executive Authorization  
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1987

|  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| Executive Office . . . . .                         | \$ 511,703          |
| Comptroller Operations . . . . .                   | 452,000             |
| Bureau of Administrative Services . . . . .        | 3,875,219           |
| Information and Education . . . . .                | 2,652,761           |
| Game Management-Propagation . . . . .              | 3,072,704           |
| Game Management-Research . . . . .                 | 954,698             |
| Law Enforcement . . . . .                          | 7,326,476           |
| Land Management . . . . .                          | 16,698,706          |
| Building Reserve . . . . .                         | 5,187,526           |
| Bureau of Management Information Systems . . . . . | 624,539             |
| Total Commitments & Expenditures . . . . .         | <u>\$41,356,332</u> |

**EXPENDITURES AND COMMITMENTS**

Current Executive Authorization  
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1987

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Salaries and Wages . . . . .                   | \$15,411,007 |
| State share employee benefits . . . . .        | 5,345,691    |
| Land purchases and acquisition costs . . . . . | 4,959,131    |

|  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Construction, engineering, design and administration<br>of new headquarters building . . . . .   | 5,187,526                         |
| Printing and advertising . . . . .<br>(atypically high because the new Game and Wildlife Code<br>necessitated the printing of two years of licenses within<br>this single fiscal year) | 1,793,589                         |
| Automotive repairs, supplies, and rentals . . . . .  | 851,147                           |
| Payments to local municipalities in-lieu-of taxes. . . . .   | 778,137                           |
| Maintenance and improvements of building, grounds,<br>and machinery . . . . .  | 1,045,144                         |
| Payments to other State agencies:  |                                   |
| Comptroller services rendered. . . . .   | 452,000                           |
| Auditing services. . . . .   | 53,876                            |
| Personnel services . . . . .   | 76,371                            |
| Purchasing services . . . . .  | 24,267                            |
| Checkwriting and disbursement services. . . . .  | 24,422                            |
| Pheasant feed . . . . .  | 447,747                           |
| Wildlife habitat seedlings and plantings . . . . .   | 55,979                            |
| Purchase of motor vehicles . . . . .   | 813,195                           |
| Travel and special conference expenses . . . . .   | 471,593                           |
| Radio and communications equipment purchases and<br>contracted maintenance service . . . . .   | 150,119                           |
| Telephone expenses . . . . .   | 421,064                           |
| Building rentals and land rights-of-way lease payments . .   | 370,038                           |
| Postage . . . . .  | 446,074                           |
| Heating, power and light . . . . .   | 291,822                           |
| Legal, appraisal, and consulting fees. . . . .   | 381,589                           |
| Other supplies and services . . . . .  | 150,727                           |
| Uniforms for Game Commission personnel . . . . .   | 102,143                           |
| Office equipment, maintenance, rentals, and supplies. . .  | 208,302                           |
| Purchase of equipment and machinery . . . . .  | 288,953                           |
| Electronic data processing contractual services, rentals,<br>and purchases . . . . .   | 323,784                           |
| Educational supplies, literature, and classroom<br>training equipment . . . . .  | 170,339                           |
| Research grants to universities and wildlife<br>associations. . . . .  | 88,000                            |
| Insurance—auto, liability, fidelity . . . . .  | 89,138                            |
| Clinical services, laboratory and medical supplies,<br>drugs . . . . .   | 5,555                             |
| Payments to individuals for bear damage claims . . . . .   | 48,624                            |
| Deer fencing . . . . .   | 29,239                            |
| <b>TOTAL . . . . .</b>   | <b><u><u>\$41,356,332</u></u></b> |

**SCHEDULE OF FIXED ASSETS**  
**JUNE 30, 1987**

|   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Land . . . . .                              | \$48,108,181                      |
| Buildings & Building Improvements . . . . . | 4,734,783                         |
| Machinery and Equipment . . . . .           | 1,919,007                         |
| Construction-In-Process . . . . .           | 3,858,035                         |
| <b>TOTAL FIXED ASSETS . . . . .</b>         | <b><u><u>\$58,620,006</u></u></b> |





# FIELD NOTES



## Learned His Lesson

**SOMERSET COUNTY**—I was talking to a pack of Cub Scouts about air rifles and gun safety when one young lad—as young lads often do—interrupted. He proceeded to tell us about the time he was visiting his grandmother and shot a snowbird with his BB gun. I followed with my usual speech of how wrong and illegal that was. After moving on to other subjects I could tell the boy was still troubled by what I had told him. Finally, he blurted out that the next time he saw his grandmother he was going to give her heck for allowing him to take his BB gun out and kill that bird. —WCO John G. Smith, Salisbury.



## Fast Learners

**CLEARFIELD COUNTY**—Two times last summer, while responding to nuisance complaints, I came face to face with a bear immediately after setting a trap. In each instance the bear was headed right for the fresh bait. In the first case the bear was trapped the same night, but I never caught the second, despite two weeks of effort. I hope the local bears haven't learned of my tricks. —WCO Colleen M. Shannon, Luthersburg.

## Best Bargain Around

I was patrolling SGL 145 on the opening day of dove season when I checked a hunter from New Jersey. He informed me he was a native of New York who had lived in Pennsylvania before moving to the Garden State. He went on to say that he feels hunting is not only the best in our state, but also the most economical, and anybody who doesn't believe it should just shop around. —LMO Ron Sutherland, Campbelltown.

## Tricked

For years my wife and I have enjoyed watching hummingbirds come to our feeder. We got real excited, though, when we thought we saw a baby hummingbird feeding. It was about one-third the size of an adult. When we told some friends about it, however, we learned we hadn't seen a bird at all. What we saw was a hummingbird moth. —LMO R. H. Muir, Kittanning.

## Strong Motivation

Food & Cover Crew worker Steve Dechant was enjoying his regular early morning run along a railroad track when he suddenly felt he wasn't alone. He looked around in the predawn darkness and discovered he was between a bear and her two cubs. Needless to say, Steve kept right on jogging. Just when he thought he had gone a safe distance, he discovered that one of the cubs was still ahead of him, apparently thinking it was being chased. Afraid Mom might have the same thoughts, Steve kicked into a near record pace. His maneuver worked, for when he stopped running, the bears were nowhere to be found. —LMO Jerry Becker, DuBois.

## Mr. Fix-It

**McKEAN COUNTY**—Back in a rural forested area near Elk State Park lives a good-natured storekeeper, Roy Smith. Roy's lived in and enjoyed the backwoods of this area for over 80 years. Every time I visit him he has a heartlifting story about the woods and wildlife he loves so much. On my latest visit Roy told me a couple of muskrats had spent the summer digging holes in the dam of his little pond. In September a beaver showed up, spent a couple of weeks patching up all the muskrat holes, and then moved on. I told Roy to keep an eye out for that beaver and any others like him because I sure could put them to work. —WCO J. Dzemyan, Smethport.



## Not Fair

**GREENE COUNTY**—Anytime you get to feeling a little low and think things are tough, compare your troubles to a bat's. They keep quiet and stay out of sight during the day. All they want to do is fly around at night with their mouths open to catch bugs that bother us all. But they get blamed for causing diseases, as being blood-suckers (they are not), and for wanting to get in a person's hair (strictly by accident, if at all). However, if someone sees one, he invariably wants to swat it with a broom. There's no justice. —WCO Robert P. Shaffer, Carmichaels.

## They Tried

While giving a Scout group a tour of the region office I was delighted to see the excited looks of recognition when I asked them to identify mounted species. But somewhere between the recognizing and the naming there was a breakdown. An otter was identified as a beaver, a groundhog as a beaver, and a muskrat as a muckrat. —IES Barry K. Moore, Saltsburg.

## Testimonials

**CLEARFIELD COUNTY**—Since 1983 we've been giving wildlife seed mix to cooperators in our Farm Game and Safety Zone programs who want to establish wildlife cover on their properties. Nearly every one of these cooperators is amazed at the wide assortment of birds and mammals that use the plots, especially in winter, when food and cover are hardest to find. —WCO Don Zimmerman, Drifting.

## Good Tour

Last August we conducted a Game Lands tour for the Northeastern Pennsylvania Audubon Society. Our trip coincided with the release of eight bald eagles from our hacking facility. Participants were able to observe the newly released young eagles and a mature one. We also saw an immature red-shouldered hawk, great blue heron, osprey, several rabbits, and a host of other species. —LMO Wilmer R. Peoples, Hawley.

## Or Where

**CLEARFIELD COUNTY**—Deputy Barry Lumadue's sister reported an odd sighting at the Clearfield Hospital. She was working the night shift last summer when she noticed a skunk and a bobwhite feeding under a light in the parking lot. Each seemed oblivious to the other's presence as they dined on the never-ending supply of insects. The skunk I could understand, but the quail was not behaving like quail are supposed to. —WCO Jack Furlong, Ramey.





### Aggressive

**SOMERSET COUNTY**—There's a new security system at our house. In June a male bobwhite took over our property. Ever since, nobody can come or leave without this bird rushing up and giving him a few good pecks on the feet. When somebody tries to outrun him, he takes to the air, lands on the person's shoulder, and pecks his ear. Our release of a female only temporarily lured him away from the door, and now it looks as if we'll have an entire covey of attack quail to look forward to. —WCO Cliff Guindon, Jr., Boswell.

### Good Program

**ARMSTRONG COUNTY**—Every year the wildlife conservation officers in this county spend a couple of sessions at the State Police Camp Cadet program. We speak on firearm safety and give trapping and shooting demonstrations. This fine program, conducted by the State Police, gives area youth an opportunity for a week of fun and learning, and to meet the personnel of various law enforcement agencies. Discipline and respect are stressed and it is most gratifying to see these young men develop into fine adults as a result of this program. A tip of the stetson goes to Trooper Philip Hipchen and his staff for a job well done. —WCO Barry Seth, Worthington.

### Brotherly Love

Driving through SGL 227 I noticed two young skunks in a mowed strip of a hayfield. One was sick or injured and the other was standing guard and chasing annoying flies off its littermate. In an effort to take some pictures of the healthy one, I tried everything I could to separate them, but to no avail. With tail raised, the tiny skunk would back up a foot or two, squeal, defiantly stomp its two front feet in unison, and then return to the other. I left the area without any pictures, but with total admiration for the little stinker's loyalty to its littermate. —LMO Stephen L. Opet, Tamaqua.



### Right At Home

**SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY**—At the Harford Fair a man approached our exhibit trailer and asked Deputy Larry DeWolfe and me what it was that was making chirping noises at night. The only thing I could think of was spring peepers or tree frogs. The man, in all seriousness, asked us if we sprayed for them. When Larry suggested they might be crickets, the man asked if we sprayed for them. When we told him no, he became angry, saying that he moved to the country to get some peace and rest, but that he was being kept awake all night. Maybe we should have suggested that he tape some city noises and play them when he goes to bed. —WCO Charles J. Arcovitch, Kingsley.

## Spinning Wheels

The most discouraging aspect of being a land manager is seeing the destruction and vandalism on state game lands. It's especially frustrating because I see firsthand how many hours and dollars must be spent cleaning up litter, replacing signs and gates, and maintaining parking lots, roads and fields. What's actually lost when ATVs are driven illegally across planted fields, through newly planted tree seedlings and on pond dikes is incalculable. With similar losses and damages occurring on our nearly million and a half acres across the state, the magnitude of just maintaining land torn up by slobs greatly takes away from our ability to improve habitat. — LMO Keith Harbaugh, Meadville.



## Disco Dining

**ELK COUNTY**—When bears began helping themselves to Charles Smith's sweet corn, the Gardner Hill resident tried to keep them away by placing a flashing light in his truck and parking it overnight by the field. After that didn't work, he placed several lamps and lanterns in the field at night, but that didn't work either; the bears knocked down all the corn around each light. Could the lights have added to their enjoyment? — WCO H. Harshbarger, Kersey.

## Some Good, Some Bad

**CLARION COUNTY**—Time's passed quickly and things have changed since I came to this district. Kids I gave hunter safety courses to now have kids I'm giving hunter-trapper education courses. Bear sightings have become commonplace and, based on the numbers of nuisance complaints, raccoons are increasing and skunks are decreasing. Canoe traffic on the Clarion has increased ten-fold and so has the litter. Woodchucks and crows are still nuisances in many areas, providing varmint hunters with shooting opportunities and a means to help farmers. — WCO Gordon Couillard, Clarion.

## Makes No Difference

**DAUPHIN COUNTY**—My eyes were really opened at a steel shot seminar conducted for Southeast Region personnel. As most officers proved on the shooting line, there's basically no difference between lead and steel out to about 50 yards. Me? All I can say is that if I have to pit my shooting skill with a scattergun against a live goose or duck, I would give new meaning to the title "game protector." — WCO Skip Littwin, Hummelstown.

## No Open Season

While cleaning his desk, Regional Forester Don Little was reading aloud the topics of memos, deciding their fates. "Fitness Corner"—read and trashed. "Automotive Report"—filed. "Rabies Precautions"—filed. "Rabies Precautions"—filed. "Forest Technicians—Seasons and Bag Limits." "Hey, now wait a minute!" I protested. "I know we're not at the top of the chain of command, but isn't that a little excessive?" He laughed and held up two separate memos. — FT D. C. Stiffler, Jr., Ligonier.



## All In a Day's Work

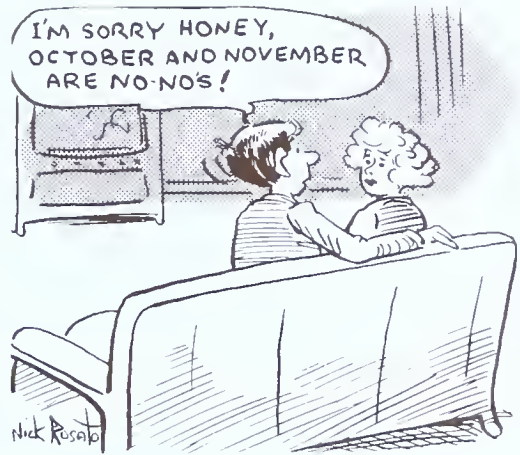
**BLAIR COUNTY**—Thinking he was just going to pick up a passenger, I'm sure a certain Altoona cab driver was surprised when he arrived at the home and was greeted by a frantic woman who exclaimed, "Keep the meter running! I've got a bat in the house! Get it out!" As directed, the cabby went in and, after a half-hour of running around, was able to chase the bat outside. After things calmed down he asked the lady if she was ready to go yet and she said, "Oh, I don't want to go anywhere. I just wanted to get rid of the bat." After receiving his fee and a nice tip, the cabby drove on to his next routine call. — WCO Stephen A. Kleiner, Altoona.

## Not Likely

**LYCOMING COUNTY**—August was the month of the panther in my district. I received more panther reports then than at any other time. Here are some answers for those who haven't called yet: No, we didn't stock any cougars to control the deer herd; Yes, I believe you think you did see a cougar, I just need something more tangible—a track, for instance, and, no, you may not shoot one. I feel most of these sightings are of coyotes. Coyotes are becoming increasingly common and most of us are not accustomed to seeing them, especially when all we get is a fleeting glimpse. — WCO D. Marks, Williamsport.

## Look Around

**DAUPHIN COUNTY**—With hunting season winding down, I hope you've had a good one. If not, I'd like to suggest you do some post-season scouting. Winter is the best time for learning where game animals can be found. Snow cover makes tracking easy, and tracks don't lie. Winter scouting is enjoyable and can really pay off the next fall. — WCO Scott R. Bills, Halifax.



## Go For March

**WESTMORELAND COUNTY**—Some folks actually do plan early. A gentleman recently asked for the opening dates of the 1989 small game seasons. He was planning his wedding date and wanted no conflicts with the hunting seasons. As he stated, "Nobody would show up, and my bride would be upset." — WCO Dennis L. Neideigh, Greensburg.

## Tangled and Mauled

**ADAMS COUNTY**—The repairman won't believe what's happened to my mobile radio. After capturing a woodchuck from an area where many children play, I was on my way to the country to release it. Heavy traffic kept my attention on my driving, so it was too late by the time I noticed the chuck had escaped and was behind the dash, playing havoc with the wires. — WCO L. D. Haynes, Gettysburg.

## Marginal Problems

**SNYDER COUNTY**—Last summer I received many bear reports. Bruins were in towns, at camps, damaging beehives, eating corn, destroying trees, and bothering livestock. One even got in the habit of biting holes in water lines. I'm sure glad my district is only "marginal bear range." — WCO John B. Roller, Beavertown.



# Game Commission Publications & Items

| Quantity | Books   | Price    |
|----------|---|----------|
| _____    | BIRDS OF PENNSYLVANIA, by James & Lillian Wakeley . . . . .   | \$ 10.00 |
| _____    | THE WINGLESS CROW, by Charles Fergus . . . . .                | \$ 10.00 |
| _____    | MAMMALS OF PENNSYLVANIA, by J. Kenneth Douth, et al . . . . . | \$ 4.00  |
| _____    | GONE FOR THE DAY, by Ned Smith . . . . .                      | \$ 4.00  |
| _____    | PENNSYLVANIA WILD GAME COOKBOOK . . . . .                     | \$ 4.00  |
| _____    | DUCKS AT A DISTANCE . . . . .                                 | \$ 1.00  |
| _____    | WOODLANDS AND WILDLIFE . . . . .                              | \$ 2.00  |
| _____    | PENNSYLVANIA TRAPPING MANUAL, by Paul Failor . . . . .        | \$ 3.00  |

## Working Together for Wildlife Collectibles

|       |   |          |
|-------|---|----------|
| _____ | 1988 ART PRINT "Snowy Egret" . . . . .          | \$125.00 |
| _____ | 1987 ART PRINT "Autumn Challenge" . . . . .     | \$125.00 |
| _____ | 1986 ART PRINT "Country Lane Kestrel" . . . . . | \$125.00 |
| _____ | 1988 SNOWY EGRET PATCH . . . . .                | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1987 ELK PATCH . . . . .                        | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1987 ELK DECAL . . . . .                        | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1986 KESTREL PATCH . . . . .                    | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1986 KESTREL DECAL . . . . .                    | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1985 BOBCAT PATCH . . . . .                     | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1985 BOBCAT DECAL . . . . .                     | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1984 BLUEBIRD PATCH . . . . .                   | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1984 BLUEBIRD DECAL . . . . .                   | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1983 OTTER DECAL . . . . .                      | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1982 OSPREY DECAL . . . . .                     | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1981 FLYING SQUIRREL PATCH . . . . .            | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1981 FLYING SQUIRREL DECAL . . . . .            | \$ 1.00  |

## Wildlife Management Areas

|       |  |         |
|-------|--|---------|
| _____ | PYMATUNING WATERFOWL PATCH . . . . .   | \$ 2.00 |
| _____ | PYMATUNING WATERFOWL DECAL . . . . .   | \$ 1.00 |
| _____ | MIDDLE CREEK WATERFOWL PATCH . . . . . | \$ 2.00 |
| _____ | MIDDLE CREEK WATERFOWL DECAL . . . . . | \$ 1.00 |

## Pennsylvania Bird and Mammal Charts

|       |   |         |
|-------|---|---------|
| _____ | Set 1 (4 charts) 20" x 30" . . . . .                                    | \$ 4.00 |
| _____ | Set 2 (4 charts) 20" x 30" . . . . .                                    | \$ 4.00 |
| _____ | Set 3 (8 charts) 11" x 14" . . . . .                                    | \$ 4.00 |
| _____ | GAME NEWS Cover Prints (4 by Ned Smith) 11" x 14" . . . . .             | \$ 4.00 |
| _____ | State Symbols Chart 20" x 30" (Deer, Grouse, Hemlock, Laurel) . . . . . | \$ 2.00 |

## SPORT Items

|       |  |         |
|-------|--|---------|
| _____ | Bronze SPORT Tie-Tac/Lapel Pin . . . . . | \$ 3.50 |
| _____ | SPORT License Plate . . . . .            | \$ 4.00 |
| _____ | SPORT Patch . . . . .                    | \$ 1.00 |
| _____ | SPORT Hat (Adult or Youth Size . . . . . | \$ 4.00 |

## GAME NEWS

|       |  |         |
|-------|--|---------|
| _____ | GAME NEWS Binder (Holds 12 Issues) . . . . . | \$ 5.00 |
|-------|--|---------|

## Waterfowl Management Stamps (Voluntary)

|       |  |         |
|-------|--|---------|
| _____ | 1988 Waterfowl Management Duck Stamp . . . . . | \$ 5.50 |
| _____ | 1987 Waterfowl Management Duck Stamp . . . . . | \$ 5.50 |
| _____ | 1986 Waterfowl Management Duck Stamp . . . . . | \$ 5.50 |

Mail orders along with remittance to Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797. Checks should be made payable to Pennsylvania Game Commission.

DO NOT SEND CASH

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# Record Bear Harvest

By Ted Godshall

PGC Information Officer

**P**ENNSYLVANIA hunters harvested a record 1,556 bears during the three-day 1987 season November 23-25. The previous record, 1,547, was compiled during the two-day 1984 season.

Good weather conditions, including a tracking snow, which also improved visibility, was partially responsible for an unusually high opening day harvest of at least 1,039 bruins.

Prior to the 1987 hunt, wildlife managers had estimated the state's bear population to be approximately 7,500. To maintain that level for 1988, it was necessary to harvest more than 1,500 during the 1987 season.

"We're satisfied with 1987's harvest," says Dale Sheffer, Bureau of Game Management director. "Actually, with the high population we now have, it would have been better for both the resource and Pennsylvanians if hunters had taken a few more—in fact, a harvest of 2,000 wouldn't have hurt. As it is, we'll have at least as many bears in fall of 1988 as we had last year—possibly there may be even a few more. But the upward spiral of the past few years has been slowed, if not halted."

Sheffer points out bear damage complaints and reports of nuisance bears continue at an elevated level, and Pennsylvania probably had more bears

in 1987 than ever before. Slightly more than 89,000 of the 100,000 bear licences allocated were sold, helping to hold down the final harvest figure.

By regions, 100 bears were taken in the northwest, 127 in the southwest, 873 in the northcentral, 55 in the southcentral, 396 in the northeast, and 5 in the southeast.

Although it came as no surprise to local wildlife conservation officers, the harvest in the southwest region was exceptionally high. County harvests in 1986 for Indiana, Cambria, Westmoreland and Somerset, for example, were 16, 10, 6 and 7. Just a year later, however, those county figures jumped to 53, 25, 18 and 31.

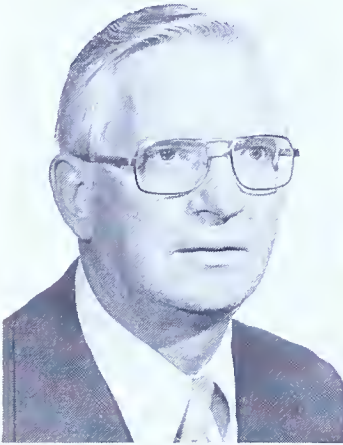
Lycoming County, as usual, produced the most bears taken by hunters, 163. Other top counties were Clinton, 157; Centre, 112; and Clearfield, 106.

Harvest figures for other counties were: Tioga, 86; Pike, 84; Elk, 72; Cameron and McKean, 58 each; Indiana, 53; Monroe, 51; Carbon and Potter, 50 each; Jefferson, 45; Luzerne, 36; Warren, 34; Somerset, 31; Wayne, 29; Lackawanna and Sullivan, 28 each; Bradford, 26; Cambria, 25; Forest, 23; Huntingdon, 19; Westmoreland and Wyoming, 18 each; Venango, 17; Snyder, 15; Mifflin, 13; Union, 11; Clarion and Columbia, 10 each; Blair, 7; Schuylkill, 5; Armstrong, 4; and Crawford, Juniata, Montour and Susquehanna, 1 each.



**ZENO "ZIP" SMITH, West Sunbury, and CHARLES STAHL, Butler, took these trophies, both males, from Potter County. Zip's weighed 240 pounds and Charles's weighed 440.**

# Pennsylvania Game Commission Retirees



**G. KIRKPATRICK**  
Director  
Law Enforcement  
York  
5-25-52 – 3-20-87



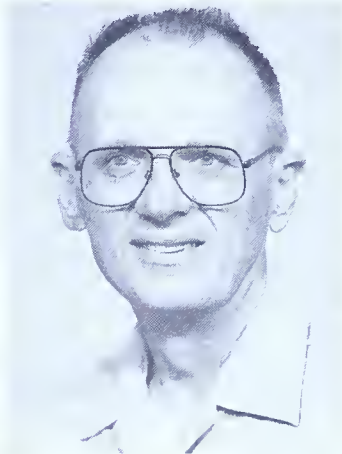
**F. C. WEIGELT**  
Wildlife Conservation  
Officer  
Galilee  
6-30-56 – 12-25-87



**E. P. NELSON**  
Game Farm Coordinator  
Trout Run  
3-4-47 – 1-22-88



**R. D. FURRY**  
GCO Manager 1  
Huntingdon  
6-30-56 – 12-26-86



**J. J. KRIZ**  
Game Biologist 2  
Fairview  
6-20-60 – 6-26-87



**R. HOWSARE**  
Equipment Operator 1  
Bedford  
7-5-56 – 12-26-86

## Thoughts While Walking

*The great object is that every man be armed . . . everyone who is able may have a gun.*  
— Patrick Henry

*The very atmosphere of firearms everywhere restrains evil interference—they deserve a place of honor with all that is good.*

— George Washington

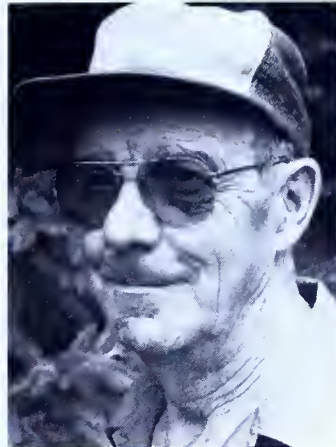




**R. W. COADY**  
Forester 2  
Spring Run  
1-3-70—1-9-87



**D. C. BERRY**  
Clerical Supv. 1  
Mill Hall  
6-1-55—6-26-87



**P. MAWHINNEY**  
Semi-Skilled Laborer  
Franklin  
7-29-58—5-1-87

In addition to the persons shown on this and the preceding page, the following employees also recently retired. Unfortunately, no photos are available. Paul G. Miller, Semi-Skilled Laborer, Reading, 12-20-71—12-25-87; Madeleine Andrews, Clerical Supervisor 1, Ligonier, 3-21-61—3-20-87; Anita M. Walters, Clerk-Steno 2, Franklin, 2-23-68—1-9-87; Robert M. Henn, Semi-Skilled Laborer, Hamburg, 3-14-60—12-26-86; Gerald L. Russ, Forest Technician 2, Unityville, 7-18-70—6-5-87.



**ARIN DERAMO** OF Verona, above, was 15 when he bagged his first buck, during the 1986 season, in Jefferson Co. Brian Rhodes of Harrisburg, above right, 14, got his in Dauphin Co. The youngster's was an 8-pointer, while his dad Dusty got a 6-point on the same day. Both of these bucks were taken in Lower Paxton Twp.







**I THOUGHT I HAD JUST lost my first shot at a spring gobbler. Looking around frantically, I saw the gobbler about 20 yards away, strutting right in front of my gun. . . .**

# THE TROPHY

**By Kody Barto**

**S**TRUTTING, gobbling, and clucking as he searched for the source of the clucks, yelps and cackles made by my father was the biggest gobbler I had ever seen. With the sun shining on his iridescent feathers, his tail fanned, I watched as his red, white and blue head pivoted like a periscope. My heart was pounding so hard I was sure he could hear it. But even my father's best calling couldn't move him within shooting range. Twenty minutes passed and he was still 35 yards away. After four weeks of rising early and stumbling in the dark to a hiding place, my season was reduced to this final day of the season and my success depended on that turkey taking just a few more steps.

Opening day had found my father and me heading for the heart of Tussey Mountain. We hiked to the top of the ridge and found a good vantage point to listen for gobblers. The action started immediately. My father's first hoot from his barred owl call was answered by two gobblers on different roosts. We started to imitate a hen at first light. After a few yelps and clucks we got our responses, but as would be the case for the rest of the season, despite all the gobbling no turkeys came within range.

Turkey hunting, I learned, can be very frustrating. Hunters interrupt while you're working a gobbler, or a hen may join the gobbler and then they both may leave. In one particular inci-

dent, my dad and I were working a gobbler and he was coming in with all his splendor. Everything seemed perfect. Then we heard a sick sounding gobble to our right. It was not a turkey, though, it was a man. After a few more of his calls, the feathered turkey wasted no time heading off in the opposite direction. That incident was one of three when other hunters invaded our hunt. Although there were bad days, every day was full of new learning experiences.

The last Friday of the season was a memorable one for my father. He shot a 17-pound gobbler with a five-inch beard. Even though my father was more than satisfied with his bird, he couldn't stop thinking about the big gobbler that had eluded him for five years. I had heard about that big one many times. Now he was what motivated me to get up that last morning.

My dad woke me and we started for the spot where he had shot his gobbler the day before. When we arrived at our parking spot I got out with the distinct impression that the day—and the season—was going to end with me without a gobbler. As we began to walk I wondered if I had made the right choice about going out that morning. My legs soon began to tire; the place we were headed was the farthest I had walked all year.

### Tiptoed In

When we finally arrived my dad motioned that we were entering the turkey's roosting area. We tiptoed in and found a place to sit. I was leaning against a dead tree, my dad was off to my left. Fifteen minutes passed after my dad began to call, but no matter how hard I listened, I couldn't hear anything. Around 7:30, when I was almost asleep, my dad turned and asked, "Where should we go now?" I said I didn't care. I picked up my gun and headed back to the truck. Just before we arrived there Dad asked if he should call one more time. I said, "Sure," with a confidence I certainly didn't feel. He hit a few clucks, then a

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Mature Bald Eagle



Immature Bald Eagle



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REWARD OFFICE, DALLAS, TEXAS

yelp, and I couldn't believe it—way off in the distance, one answered.

Dad quickly moved us down near a grove of oaks. I was sitting a little distance ahead of him. He called again, and judging by how clear the response was, that gobbler must have really been moving. As I positioned my gun I began to recall all the instructions I had received on how to shoot a gobbler. I remembered Dad stressing the importance of pointing the head of my 12-gauge pump right at the base of the gobbler's neck. When Dad called again the gobbler sounded as if he were in my pocket. From then on every time the bird gobbled my heart jumped. I looked to my right and saw a dark shape about 30 yards away, coming down right in front of me. The only problem was a thick layer of brush between me and that gobbler.

Now after about 45 minutes, my arms, legs and everything associated with my body began to ache. Holding my shotgun in the same position for half an hour was sure tiring. When he appeared in an opening, just out of range, I saw one of the most beautiful sights ever. The gobbler was strutting: his enormous tailfeathers were fanned,



his wings dropped to the ground, and his long beard hung down from his chest. Every now and then he would lean his body and head forward and gobble.

Dad stopped calling. To me, at the moment, that seemed dumb. I then saw, after about two minutes, that the big boss thought he had just lost a lady friend. He became frustrated and started to move. When he walked down behind a big oak tree I thought I had just lost my first shot at a spring gobbler. Looking around frantically, I saw the gobbler about 20 yards away, strutting right in front of my gun.

I gently flicked off the safety, put the sight on the base of his neck, and

touched her off. When I looked up all I could see was my dad running to the gobbler and the gobbler flopping on the ground. I dashed after him.

Dad grabbed me and gave me a great big congratulatory hug. At our feet was the boss gobbler that had eluded my dad and grandfather for five years. If it had not been for my dad's encouragement, I would never have had a chance at a gobbler that weighed 22-pounds 9-ounces and had a 10-inch beard.

That gobbler is the only turkey I have ever shot. I owe my Dad a lot of credit for helping me get the ol' boss. I'm sure I'll never forget that day as long as I live though I'm now only 15.

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## *Books in Brief...*

(Order from publisher, not from Game Commission)

**Fireside Waterfowler**, edited by David E. Wesley and William G. Leitch, Stackpole Books, Cameron & Kelker Sts., Harrisburg, PA 17105, 352 pp., \$32.95, delivered. Follow waterfowl through the seasons with the most preeminent waterfowl experts in North America as your guides in this Ducks Unlimited book. Beginning with spring migrations, through the perils of winter, and concluding with future prospects for ducks and geese, the status of North American waterfowl is thoroughly covered in an easily readable fashion. Everybody interested in waterfowl will enjoy this book.

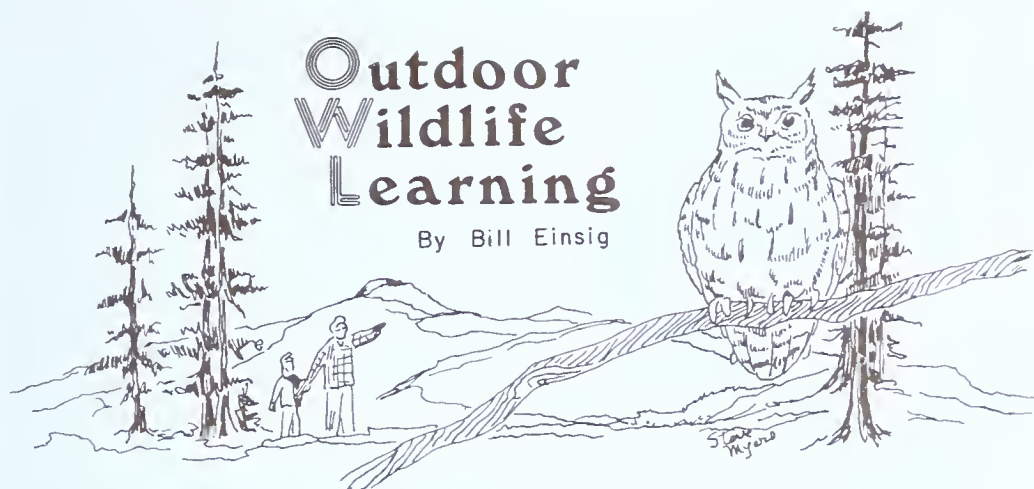
**Gun Dogs & Bird Guns**, by Charles F. Waterman, GSJ Press, 205 Willow St., South Hamilton, MA 01982, 219 pp., \$25. Twenty-five humorous short stories about the joys and frustrations of owning and hunting birds with dogs. Fine fireside reading for hunters of all sorts.

**Don't Blame the Indians**, by Ted Williams, GSJ Press, 205 Willow St., South Hamilton, MA 01982, softbound, \$12.95. Here, by one of today's finest outdoor writers, is a thorough, definitive—and critical—account of the concessions native Americans have been granted when it comes to fish and wildlife resources. Although an extremely complicated topic, placing social and environmental issues in conflict, it's an issue that's threatening the well-being of many species and compromising resource management programs throughout North America.

**Bob Clark's Cure for Turkey Fever**, by Bob Clark, from the author, 102 Beechwood Dr., Mechanicsburg, PA 17055, 160 pp., softbound, \$12.95, delivered. Bob Clark has become synonymous with turkey hunting. In this, his latest book on the subject, all the basics are covered. From the grand old bird's natural history to hunting equipment and techniques and, finally, preparing one for the table, there's plenty of worthwhile advice for both novice and experienced nimrods, and it's especially relevant to Pennsylvania. The author's love of the sport and the outdoors in general is most evident here, making this good reading for not just turkey hunters, but all outdoorsmen.

# Outdoor Wildlife Learning

By Bill Einsig



## Airguns and Kids

**A**IRGUNS are not what they used to be. As a youngster in the early '50s, I cut my shooting teeth on a hand-me-down Daisy Red Ryder BB gun that had already seen tough times. The little lever action had a cracked stock but the shooting mechanism was still dependable. It wasn't very powerful or accurate, but I guess you could say I learned to shoot with it.

A few years later, my parents gave me a new pump action. What an improvement! This gun was the envy of the neighborhood. It was powerful, by air rifle standards, and accurate.

One of my favorite feats with that gun was to shoot at the trunk of a huge tree over 100 yards away. I used a solid washline post as a rest and aimed as high on that trunk as possible. After squeezing off the shot, I would wait for the BB to complete its long arc, and sometimes if there was no wind I'd hear a barely audible *ThWack*. Amazing!

Today, that sort of thing is not so amazing. Current airgun models shoot harder, faster and more accurately than ever before. They are also more dangerous.

As a result, parents need to be cautious about buying an airgun for their youngster. Airguns are fine for training young shooters in all phases of gun handling and shooting safety, but they are not toys and so should never be handed over to a youngster to be used without direct adult supervision. The risks are far too great.

Airgun manufacturers recognize the

potential for serious accidents and go to great lengths to change attitudes of shooters in my generation who remember BB guns as the popguns of 40 years or more ago. The industry has a self-imposed guideline that separates "youth" airguns from "adult" airguns. They recommend that airguns with a muzzle velocity of 350 feet per second (fps) or greater not be sold to customers under the age of 14, and that lower-powered models not be sold to youngsters below the age of 8 years. It's possible to argue about those recommendations but the message to parents is clear—airguns are not toys; adult supervision is required.

Parents hoping to use an airgun as a training aid face a number of choices. They should study the market to find a model that best fits their needs and budget. It's as much a mistake to buy too little gun as it is to buy too much gun.

Some airguns, especially the lower powered youth models, shoot only BBs. Other models, usually more powerful, shoot only lead pellets in 177, 20, or 22 caliber. Many popular models shoot both BBs and 177 pellets.

Pellets are more accurate than BBs and hit with more impact. However, most pellet guns, especially those that also fire BBs, are only single shots, while a lot of BBs can be loaded at a time. For general plinking, BBs are far more convenient and permit much faster shooting.

Airguns also vary in their power supply. Many youth guns are spring powered, while adult models offer the choice of CO<sub>2</sub> cylinders or pneumatic systems powered by one or more pumps of a forearm lever.

The Daisy Model 105 is a typical spring powered BB gun often sold as a starter gun for the youngest of shooters. Its small

DO SOMETHING

WILD



**THE WILD RESOURCE CONSERVATION ACT of 1982 gives all Pennsylvanians an opportunity to actively support the protection and management of the state's wealth of natural resources. Modeled after the "income tax check off system" used successfully by 33 other states, Pennsylvania taxpayers may contribute all or a portion of their income tax refund to protect nongame wildlife and native plants. Much more can and needs to be done to protect our natural resources. So, when you're filling out your tax return, look for the owl and "Do Something Wise." And if an income tax refund is not due, contributions may still be made directly to the Wild Resource Conservation Fund, P.O. Box 1467-G, Harrisburg, PA 17120.**

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size and low muzzle velocity might misguide parents into thinking this little gun is just a toy. Not true. Its maximum shooting distance is almost 200 yards, and the danger at close range to eyes and other sensitive body areas is almost as great as that of its more powerful cousins. However, the particular gun I used was not accurate, and for that reason I think it's a poor choice for a training rifle. Young shooters need to be rewarded with good scores when they use good technique.

At the top end of Daisy's youth line is the Model 840, a single pump pneumatic that shoots both BBs and .177-caliber pellets. Its smooth bore is extremely accurate on a 25-foot range, and the easy, single pump action makes it a fine choice as a first airgun for young shooters.

More powerful adult air rifles can chal-

lenge the skill of even experienced marksmen. Simply put, within their range, they hit consistently where they are aimed.

The Crosman 2100 Classic is a good example of this class. It has the heft, feel and look of a good 22 rimfire rifle, and the accuracy of its rifled steel barrel is outstanding. Recently my family and I shot this gun for hours, with excellent results.

The 2100's pumping action is typical of the adult pneumatic rifles in this class. Muzzle velocity increases with the number of pumps up to a maximum of 10 pumps. Pumping beyond that limit yields little increase in muzzle velocity and can harm the rifle.

If you choose a multi-pump pneumatic as an air rifle for the whole family to shoot, expect to do a lot of pumping. Five or six pumps are more than adequate for most plinking, but the pumping is a bit too tough for most youngsters.

One final safety aspect deserves serious consideration. Airguns can be shot safely in the backyard or even inside a house if precautions are taken to stop the BB or pellet and to prevent ricochets. Targets that trap the projectiles are best.

I mounted a sheet of half-inch homosote backboard to an oak stockade fence. The more powerful airguns blasted through this common backer-board easily, and I had to back it up with quarter-inch plywood to protect my fence. The less powerful airguns, however, could not penetrate this material, and the BBs bounced off. That can be dangerous. My first test shot at 25 feet ricocheted and hit me just below my right ear. That was a bit too close and illustrates why safety glasses should be worn whenever shooting.

A cardboard box filled with crumpled newspaper, cardboard panels and other packing material will slow the shot and keep it inside the box. Place the box in front of a sturdy backer-board so that even pellets from the more powerful air rifles which might penetrate the trap will be stopped without ricochet. Perhaps the best target system is a commercial steel trap made to stop both BBs and pellets.

The days of handing a BB gun to a youngster and setting him loose on his own to learn the basics of shooting should be gone forever. In its place has come a new opportunity to safely use airguns for training young shooters and a new excitement for the growing sport of precision airgun shooting.



# Learn from Nonresidents

**T**HE DESIRE to hunt has no boundaries. What are state borders but lines on a map, political divisions that, though they require attention to differing laws and practices, are merely ink deposits on paper? Out in the open air, along the states' borders, field melts into field and forestland flows on without impediment. Wild turkey flocks feed from New York into Pennsylvania and back again, while bucks bound easily between Pennsylvania and West Virginia without breaking cover. To the hunter on either side of the "fence," if the hunting doesn't look more inviting on the other side, at least it looks like an added opportunity to enjoy his sport in a different setting.

As a Pennsylvania resident of 15 years, but a Jersey-born gal, I have a special sympathy and understanding for the out-of-state hunter. I was one myself for the first few years of my hunting career. Friends and relatives from my hometown still frequently make the trip out to hunt the Pennsylvania hills with me. I've found that all the nonresident gunners and archers I've known, from whatever state, share considerable enthusiasm for Pennsylvania. Otherwise, why would they pay \$68 more than you or I to hunt it?

In my experience, out-of-staters tend to spend more hours afield than the rest of us who have hunting cheap and nearby all the time, and most hunt a little harder too. I spent part of one buck season with a group of locals in

the Erie County farmlands, driving. Everyone met at the farmhouse around 8 o'clock and sipped coffee and ate homemade sticky buns until 9. By then one of the in-laws, who had driven over from Ohio, would be back from his morning stand at the farm's elm tree crossing. His relatives joked about the way the Ohioan was out there each day, freezing before sun-up, while they usually got their deer on the afternoon drives and got the sweet rolls as well. But the laughter died down and the room got quiet when one of them observed, "Y'know, he did get that big 12-point, settin' out in the snow like that, year before last."

## An Event

Traveling across a state line into new territory makes a hunt an event, a true vacation. Nonresidents who visit Pennsylvania to hunt make time for it, and not just a spare day or two. While at a campground in the Endless Mountains of northern Pennsylvania, I noticed that the folks tenting at the next site were wearing camouflage. They turned out to be New Yorkers who'd taken three weeks off to hunt our bow season. The hunters whose car I'd seen parked in the same pull-off in the Allegheny National Forest, every day for a week, had come from Ohio to hunt turkeys and black squirrels. At a down-country diner the second week of buck season, the brawny bunch overheard talking about the "big rack Joe missed today" and discussing the possibility of wrestling him down to cut off a shirt-tail, were all up for the full two weeks from Maryland.

In the last few years, I've done the converse, expanding my hunting time by traveling to several states near Pennsylvania. Sometimes the lure was a season that began earlier or stayed open later than ours and thus gave me additional hunting opportunity. Or I had filled my limit in Pennsylvania and went out of state for a second chance to

## Another View...

by Linda Steiner



**IN MY EXPERIENCE, out-of-staters tend to spend more hours afield than the rest of us who have hunting cheap and nearby all the time, and most hunt a little harder too.**

pursue the same species elsewhere.

If I wanted that extra hunting time, the nonresident license seemed cheap. I looked at it as I would at any other vacation expense, the same as if I'd chartered a boat or paid greens fees for golf. If I didn't spend enough time there to make the license a bargain on a per-day basis, the fault was no one's but my own. The opportunity for days afield certainly existed. I'm sure the nonresident hunter who comes to Pennsylvania feels the same.

Traveling out of state to hunt always added a bit of adventure for me. I liked the fact that I was hunting a completely new area, often in different terrain than I was accustomed to. The unfamiliar was inviting—the rock-backed ridges of West Virginia, where erosion had left just spires of stone on the tops, or the cold high mountain swamps of New Hampshire, touched early with autumn's fire.

Within its borders, though, Pennsylvania has a variety of terrain types and game habitats, the surroundings

always changing as we travel any point of the compass. It's a shame that more nonresidents than Keystone Staters probably know the extent of Pennsylvania's offerings. They come here to explore the commonwealth and enjoy the ways it is different from their home states.

A lot has been said, maybe too much, about tradition—being in the same spot each year to see the hunting season in, or out. I think that practice promotes boredom, or at least a sense of living in the past. If that sounds like the rut you're in, add spice to your next hunting season by acting like a nonresident in your own home state. Be an in-state tourist-sportsman.

Erie Countian, have you ever skirted a steep sidehill in the Northcentral's "Grand Canyon" country while vistas unfolded along Pine Creek? Pittsburgher, have you ever hunted a Pocono swamp for snowshoe hare, under tamaracks and tall rhododendron, in a sphagnum bog you won't see the likes of many places south of Maine? And you sportsmen in Scranton or Philadelphia, when was the last time you walked a pine and oak mountaintop in the Southwest's Laurel Highlands? The rows of ridges fade into blue toward West Virginia and down there, near the border, you can get sausage gravy and biscuits for breakfast and the waitress will say "Now, y'all come back," and mean it.

### **In Own Backyard**

Pennsylvania is not that wide of a state and it is shallower than it is long. My friends from eastern New Jersey can breakfast at home and have lunch with me here in far western Pennsylvania, so travel distance is no excuse for not seeing and hunting other portions of the state. Make the extra investment to hunt our wild lands that nonresidents do. They appreciate what Pennsylvania hunting has to offer. Sometimes it takes the fresh eye of an out-of-stater to make a resident hunter see just how much he has in his own backyard.



**A**FTER two years in the Seabees, you'd think I would remember some advice I heard so often in the Navy—"Never volunteer for anything!" Nevertheless, I volunteered to write this year's "DGP Diary"—with some modifications. I told the editor I'd like to change the approach and write about various interesting things I'd been involved with during my 20 years as a game protector. He said okay, but that it would require a change of title. That explains why this column is now called "Looking Backwards."

Twenty years may seem like a long time, but many game protectors have more time in the field than I have. Actually, some of these elder men assisted in my initial training, and others helped train me without even knowing.

Game protectors are a dedicated group of men—not only those in Pennsylvania but also across the nation. Many of the experiences I will be writing about are shared by game protectors everywhere.

I would like to dedicate these articles to my fellow officers who form a thin green line protecting the wildlife of the commonwealth, and to those who have retired.

Western Bradford County has been my district for 19 years. Prior to that I served as a deputy game protector in the Harrisburg district for several years before attending the Ross Leffler School of Conservation.

### **Share Experiences**

During this year I would like to share some of the experiences I have had as a game protector. These experiences deal with long hours, phone calls in the wee small hours of the morning, irate people who have had damage done by wildlife or hunters, people who are sure the law was made only for the other person, criticism for doing the job, and violators who are operating on a commercial basis and would think nothing of causing bodily damage, or possibly even death, to those who interfere with their "business."

Most game law violations are not premeditated. They occur when an opportunity suddenly arises and a hunter gives in to temptation. Some violations happen because of ignorance—the hunter really doesn't know he is breaking the law. Premeditated violations also take place.

I have discovered that you cannot please everyone. Either you are "too soft" or "too hard" on a violator. It didn't take me long to realize that you have to do what



**By Bill Bower**

**Wildlife Conservation Officer  
Bradford County**

you think is best in a particular situation.

I will be writing about some interesting game law violations (naturally, I will change the violator's name, the place, and the time the violation occurred). Wildlife violators come from all walks of life—rich, poor, young, old. Some were (and in some cases still are) my friends. I sometimes wonder if heredity has something to do with violations, as I have arrested a grandfather, son, and grandson. Maybe I have broken the chain, for the grandson now has a son and so far he's caused me no problem.

Sometimes the violator's story is a heart-jerking experience. A father turns in a deer killed by mistake and finds it will cost him \$25. He doesn't have that kind of money to spare, and Christmas is only a few weeks away. The man stands before me in tattered clothes, twisting his hat in his hands, his two small children hanging on his arms. He drove up in a battered old car which will not easily start as he is about to leave. This man wants to do what is right. He has made a mistake, and I know the law says I have to arrest him, but my mind wanders back to several calls that came in earlier.

Three doe were shot and abandoned because it was buck season. One caller had seen a hunter shoot a doe, pick up the head, then give it a kick and walk away.





### Question

May I keep alive a raccoon that I caught during trapping season?

### Answer

Yes, provided that you get a permit from a Wildlife Conservation Officer.

The caller could not identify the man, but the description was of a well-dressed hunter carrying an expensive rifle. He had pulled away in a new vehicle before the caller could see the license number. I wonder where is the justice, but I know in my heart I'll never have trouble with the two children hanging on their daddy's arms. This man is the salt of the earth type who would be a good neighbor and friend. When I think of the comparison between him and the subject of the other call, my neck muscles tighten and my head starts to throb.

I will also write about different areas of the game protector's job.

A game protector works with many children during the year. He gives hunter education classes and talks concerning wildlife. In such cases he communicates on a level the children will be able to understand.

He has to be able to stand up before a group of sportsmen and explain the Game Commission's programs. Sometimes a program is not liked by the particular group he is addressing. He must be able to go to a meeting and present a program to people who do not hunt but are very interested in wildlife. A good example of this would be the DAR. This group enjoys hearing about songbirds and other non-game species as well as game species. It surely helps if the game protector is knowledgeable about all wildlife species

within the state—and some which are not found here.

A game protector must know how to deal with the violator who has just left the local bar and wants to fight him just because he is a figure of authority.

Along with the title of game protector come the duties of a secretary, which means there is a load of paperwork. To me, this is the least appealing part of the job, but it is important to the regional office. Nothing will get you in hot water with the boss quicker than being late with your reports or completely forgetting one.

A game protector must know how to handle live wild animals. Would you know how to handle a live skunk in a window well or a 50-pound beaver which has been flooding a roadway, or how to remove a bobcat from a trap? ("Very carefully," you say. Right.) Well, I think I have some humorous and interesting stories about handling wildlife.

Game protection and game wardens go way back in history. Men who were hired to protect the king's deer were called game wardens simply because game was their ward; hence, the name game warden.

Being caught red-handed was actually a degree of arrest for those first game wardens. Today we have summary and misdemeanor offenses in the wildlife code. The game wardens of long ago had different degrees. One degree was "bloody hand." The defendant was someone found in suspicious circumstances with blood on his person. That is where the phrase "caught red-handed" comes from.

### Increased Fines

The Game Commission recently increased the fines for violations of the Game Law, and some hunters might think they are quite severe. They should be aware that early game wardens acted as judge and jury. If a man was caught killing the king's deer, he would be hung on the spot with his own bowstring. If a poacher was apprehended before game was killed, he might have a hand amputated so he would no longer be able to draw a bow.

I hope you will read "Looking Backwards" next month when I will be writing about "a black bear from Fairview."

I WONDER what scents smell like to a dog. Is a scent speckled? Is it blue? Does it chime like a bell or honk like a goose? Is it soft or ribbed or jagged or rubbery? One thing I know about scent is that it means much more to my dog than it does to me.

Scent, most researchers believe, is composed of microscopic particles that an object—any object, whether inanimate or alive—constantly sheds. Because everything has its own chemical makeup, everything releases its own distinctive suite of particles. A pine tree has its own scent. The bottom of an L.L. Bean hunting shoe has its own scent. A porcupine. A human hand. An asphalt road, a manure pile, a pheasant.

Consider a pheasant skulking in a field of corn stubble. As it goes about feeding, picking up grit for its gizzard, preening, fluffing up its feathers, the bird constantly and involuntarily releases scent. The particles may come from its lungs or feet or skin or glands or feathers—probably from all of these sources. They fall onto the ground and lie in the dirt, cupped by grass and the broken cornstalks; some of them go drifting through the air.

### Cloud of Scent

Along comes a dog—a springer spaniel. Her quivering brown nose draws in pheasant scent from the breeze. A chain of reactions takes place inside the dog's nose and brain, a process that we understand only imperfectly. The spaniel's tail starts wagging. Sturdy forelegs and longer, stronger hind legs propel her into the cover (the hunter following posthaste), where she works out the trail and goes charging, blissfully, into the center of the (dun? buzzing? smooth?) cloud of scent.

As the owner of a young springer, I am interested in scent and have done some reading about it. Almost everyone who writes about bird dogs touches on the subject. Often the writings have titles like "The Vagaries of Scent" or "The Mysteries of Scent."

Most writers agree that scenting conditions depend to a large extent on the

JANUARY 1988



weather. Windy, dry days are terrible for scenting. Aridity dries out the scent particles, which must be moist to remain detectable. The dry air may work a double whammy by parching a dog's nose, dehydrating the sensitive mucous membranes that must first dissolve the microscopic particles before identifying them.

Heavy rain and bitter cold are supposed to handicap a dog. A downpour washes scent out of the air, flushes it away on the ground. Extreme cold deactivates scent particles, probably by freezing them. On a frosty morning the scenting may start off poor and then get better as the sun melts the frost, warming and releasing scent. Strong sunlight, however, will shorten the life of scent by hastening evaporation and by breaking down the chemicals.

Dogs do their best work in the cool and the damp; a light drizzle or a hanging mist creates conditions that are ideal. On such days body scent from birds seems to float in the air like a flag, while foot scent lingers, allowing trails to be puzzled out.

According to George Bird Evans in *The Upland Shooting Life*, "Scenting is especially good in the 35° to 45° range, as if thermal variation between the bird's body and the [cooler] air causes scent to rise like vapor from the bird." Using two thermometers, one at ground level and the other a few inches above it, a certain H. M. Budgett, a





master of foxhounds in England, demonstrated that hounds tracked best when the ground was two or three degrees warmer than the air; they tracked fairly competently when ground and air temperatures were equal; and they did poorly when the earth was colder than the air.

If snow covers the ground in a soft, wet blanket—especially if the sun is shining on it—scenting will be good. If the snow is grainy and hard, or light and fluffy and dancing on the wind: bad. I remember a day when the wind knifed through the pines and ice tinkled underfoot. I shot at a grouse and watched it tumble in a manner which indicated I had broken a wing. Fortunately I found enough tracks on the crust to follow the bird, which ran about a hundred yards, one wing dragging, and then wormed itself up under an overhanging stream bank. My partner's dog, a Labrador retriever with a good nose, failed to pick up any trace of the bird.

Sometimes it happens that a bird, shot and killed outright in midair, folds its wings and plummets to the ground, where a dog—even though scenting conditions are excellent—is utterly unable to find it. This is a so-called air-

washed bird, a bugbear that many writers mention. Apparently, as the bird streams down, the air strips away all traces of scent; the bird hits and doesn't move or breathe and so fails to release any new particles. This can also happen when a flushed, unhit bird lands and holds tight: apparently the frightened creature's system suppresses any new release of scent as a built-in survival mechanism. In either case, it is a puzzling and embarrassing situation when a highly touted gun dog fails to turn up the bird in a pantry-size weed-patch.

Fatigue is a factor in scenting. A pointing dog that in the morning dashes in to pin its birds (surprising them, keeping them from sneaking off or flushing before the hunter arrives) may lose its edge in the late afternoon and ruin every point. A car full of cigarette smoke, I have read, can dull a dog's nose. Strong natural odors seem less of a problem. A dog that has just rolled in manure may have no difficulty locating birds. Logan Bennett, in a slim, informative book entitled *Training Grouse and Woodcock Dogs*, describes an old pointer which killed every skunk he met. "Time after time," Bennett writes, "I saw him blinded and sickened by skunks that sprayed their musk into his mouth, nose, and eyes." Still, "On numerous occasions I saw him find, point, and hold woodcock or grouse within five minutes after encountering a skunk."

### Bad from South

Early in the season, before the frosts mow it down, thick vegetation may be troublesome, either by giving off its own overpowering scent or by trapping game scent. Dust can mask scent, and mild winds swirl it away. A bird quite close—behind a log, over the crest of a hill—may go undetected in a pocket out of the airflow. Writes Evans in *The Upland Shooting Life* (unfortunately providing no further explanation): "Some men say scenting is bad when the breeze is from the south, others say from the east."



I once had a hunting partner whose large and unruly English pointer liked to point turtles. It was disconcerting to go in with shotgun ready, all keyed up for a grouse to thunder out or a woodcock to twitter up at arm's reach, only to find a box turtle clamped inside its shell or a wood turtle lumbering off through the leaf litter. Do turtles smell like birds? Or is their scent distinctive and so enticing that the dog thinks surely the master will wish to possess this strange living stone? Logan Bennett again: "Some old-time dog trainers like to place live turtles in the puppy pens. Their theory is that turtle scent brings out the pointing instincts."

### Recognition is Instinctive

An English setter will point a grouse wing at the tender age of eight weeks, never having seen a grouse in its life. A beagle pup will tongue on a cottontail's trail without once glimpsing the shadowy rabbit. The recognition is instinctive, in the blood, passed down through generations.

Scenting abilities vary from breed to breed and from individual to individual. Most authorities believe that dogs from the same litter will inherit different degrees of scenting smarts. Dave Duffey, a columnist in *Gun Dog* magazine, writes of dogs which apparently could tell, by scent, the sex of pheasants: he had one himself, a cocker spaniel which learned not to bother with hens because they were never shot over his flushes. Duffey also owned two pointing dogs, a Gordon setter and an

## GAMEcooking Tips

### Southern Fried Squirrel

- 4 dressed squirrels
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon oregano
- 1 cup oil

Cut squirrels into serving pieces. Beat eggs. Combine dry ingredients in a paper bag. Drop pieces of squirrel one at a time into the flour seasoning mixture. Dip in egg and repeat. Allow squirrel to stand for a few minutes to dry the coating. Heat oil at 375° until a bread cube browns. When oil is ready, fry squirrel until golden on all sides, about 12 to 15 minutes. Serves 4.

—FROM WILD GAME COOKERY  
BY CAROL VANCE WARY

Irish setter, whose abilities bordered on the incredible. "With a brisk breeze coming in," he writes, "I have seen them lift their heads and weave into the air current [and then] lock up on point between an eighth and a quarter mile from where they first indicated [bird scent]."

With a young dog, the important thing is to give it lots of experience with



## The Wingless Crow

*The Wingless Crow* is a 200-page hardcover book made up of thirty-three of Chuck Fergus's "Thorn-apples" columns which have appeared in *GAME NEWS*. Wonderful reading for your own collection or as a gift. Order from the Game Commission, Dept. AR, Box 1567, Harrisburg, Pa. 17105-1567. \$10 delivered.

game. As it matures, the dog will develop whatever abilities it has inherited. It will learn to use the wind, hunting into the flow to intercept scent, working the downwind side of a fencerow to detect game hidden within. It will become adept at interpreting traces in addition to foot or body scent when following a trail: freshly scratched earth, crushed grass, broken stems, blood droplets.

I am cautioned by my sources to remember that scenting conditions are capricious. If, on a given day, my dog can't locate birds, I should keep on hunting and patiently wait for conditions to change. I should not second-guess my dog's sniffer. (Thank goodness the springer spaniel, a flushing breed, is unlikely to point turtles.) One book even urges me to have a friend smear highly odiferous oil of wintergreen on his boots and walk about in the brush, and then I am to "cast dignity aside," get down on all fours, and try to track the wintergreen quarry. Says the text, "The exercise should remove the magic and at the same time increase respect for the dog's capabilities."

I already have a great deal of respect for a dog's capabilities. I doubt if the above exercise could remove for me the magic, and magic it truly is, in a dog's ability to interpret with its nose. And I would still wonder if scent chimes, or is blue.

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## Books in Brief...

(Order from publisher, not from Game Commission)

**SPEER Reloading Manual No. 11**, edited by Dave Andrews, Omark Industries, P.O. Box 856, Lewiston, Idaho 83501, 621 pp., \$12. The late Vernon Speer founded this organization in the mid-'40s, and with his son Ray built it into one of the world's largest custom bullet companies. In 1954 Ray produced their first loading manual. Though only a small spiral-bound book, it opened up a new world to countless handloaders. The current volume explains the mechanics of reloading rifle and handgun cartridges, lists countless tested loads, discusses the use of personal computers to determine exterior ballistics, and has a large reference section dealing with subjects of interest to serious shooters. In an interesting departure from current practice, this manual groups its exterior ballistic tables according to ballistic coefficient, rather than by individual bullet. An awful lot of good information—even for hunters and shooters who don't reload as it will increase their understanding of the field.

**The Corey Ford Sporting Treasury**, Willow Creek Press, P.O. Box 300, Wautoma, WI 54982, 351 pp., \$25. This lavish volume is divided into three parts. The first features many of Ford's columns written for *Field & Stream*; the second, several of his other well known articles; and, in the final section, is his "The Road to Tinkhamtown," considered among the finest pieces of outdoor literature ever written.



**PROPRIETORS OF BOWHUNTERS WAREHOUSE** enjoy a light moment with **Fred Bear**. From left: Ed Eckman, Shaun Hughes, Bear, and Dennis Eckman.

**Bowhunters Warehouse provides . . .**

## **A Gathering of the Greats**

**By Keith C. Schuyler**

**ALTHOUGH** a road map and a good sense of direction may have been needed to find it, over 3400 attended a gathering of the greats at Super Bow Festival IV sponsored at tiny Wellsville by Bowhunters Warehouse. It was truly a collection of top names in archery, headlined by Fred Bear, who at age 85 flew up from Florida for the three-day event last August.

Missing was Fred Hughes who, as founder of Bowhunters Warehouse, which has blossomed into what is perhaps the largest mail order archery business in the world, might be considered the father of the Festival. Today the Warehouse is a joint venture of

Fred's son Shaun, and Edward and Dennis Eckman.

The Super Bow Festival, designed as a public relations project, lost money in its first year, but it has since become one of the major archery events in Pennsylvania. Archers pour in from this and surrounding states to attend sessions conducted by some of the top names in the sport, to enjoy some of the shooting provided on company and adjacent grounds, and to seek bargains on archery equipment.

Those who came to see Pennsylvania native Fred Bear didn't have long to wait. Fred, the most familiar name in archery, was on hand to chat with





**BRIAN GREEN, Ellicott City, Maryland, gets some pointers from his dad at one of the shooting areas where archers check equipment during festival.**

attendees and autograph photographs from midafternoon on the opening day, August 7, until shortly before closing on Sunday, August 9. Also at the Bear/Jennings booth were: Tom Jennings, the man closest associated with the compound bow; Larry Wise, 1986 world field pro champion; and Sherwood Schoch, who manages his own commercial archery organization. The three of them could answer any question relative to shooting the bow, even those the most expert could ask.

Dick Idol, hunter and guide in Alaska, Africa and much of this country, was on hand with a large display of world-class deer trophies, any one of which would be tough to match. Three native Pennsylvanians, Myles Keller, Harry Knickerbocker and C. J. Winand, were a part of the seminar sessions throughout the weekend. Keller, who holds more Pope and Young records than any other archer, revealed his hunting methods with a talk, "Secrets of Success." Knickerbocker, who

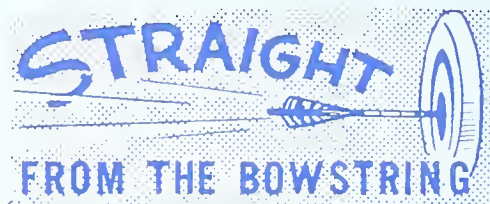
has made a study of hunter concealment, gave forth with his presentation on, "Chameleon Camouflage," and Winand discussed nuances of the rutting season gained through his experiences as a guide on Texas Trophy ranches.

### "Maggie" McGee

Humorist "Maggie" McGee entertained with his presentations of the "Bionic Bowman" and "The Quiver Kid." "Deer Vocalization" was the subject of Bob McGuire's contribution. It covered white-tailed deer calling which takes advantage of scent communication and rut behavior. Tom Fleming covered techniques of rattling up bucks to bring the dominant male deer within shooting range. Instruction on tuning the compound bow was presented by Sherwood Schoch, expert target archer and bow hunter. Larry Wise revealed some of his personal expertise in obtaining optimum performance from the bow in field shooting and in hunting. Idol also made a presentation called "Whitetail Phenomenon."

Speakers were on hand each day except when travel schedules made it impossible. Missing from the roster was Ben Rogers Lee, who ran into a scheduling conflict. His anticipated presentation on hunting turkeys with the bow and arrow surely was missed.

It has been my pleasure to associate and in some instances hunt with a number of those on the program, so I can personally attest to the general quality of the participants. Bringing together such talent where the hunting public can meet them is one of the principal benefits of the growing number of archery seminars being held across the state. Those who may nor-





**REMARKABLE ARCHERY TROPHIES** were shown by Dick Idol as part of his contribution to the all-day programs at Super Bow Festival IV.

mally only read about these archery celebrities, or see them on television, now have opportunities to meet them personally. Being able to ask questions or suggest personal ideas on a one-to-one basis with personalities who have well established themselves in the sport is a strong drawing card. Many attendees come to see the latest in equipment and ideas, which can add to the individual knowledge of many who are already advanced in target shooting or bow hunting. The programs, of course, also appeal to those who are just becoming immersed in the activity.

Importantly, a high level of ethics and respect for the game and fellow hunters is promoted by those who have a personal stake in advancing participation in bow hunting. Unfortunately, it's not uncommon to find outdoor publications carrying information from some who have marginal experience or fancy themselves as expert through a one-time, though outstanding, experience. That's not to deny that a hint of commercialization does not sometimes thread its way through presentations by some of the most proficient. But, if the thread becomes too noticeable, such bias can place in question the full cloth. By far, though, most

products and those who endorse them have stood the tests of usage and time.

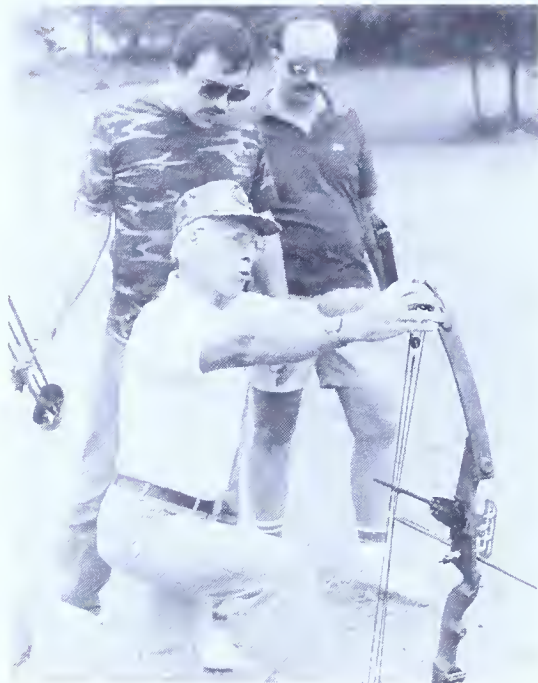
"Festivals," such as the one at Wellsville, do bring in vendors who promote a wide variety of archery products so that everyone, from novice to expert, can see first hand and compare what is available. It is a truism that products which do not make a proper or useful contribution soon disappear from the market.

### Logistics Formidable

The logistics of just putting together such an event are formidable. In this instance, problems are compounded by the fact that business, almost as usual, is carried on behind the festival scene at the sponsoring Warehouse on Friday and Saturday.

At Wellsville, a large and well ventilated tent provided comfortable protection from the heat wave that coincided with the Festival. Some of the booths were set up inside the spacious air conditioned display room of the Warehouse. Other commercial displays, representing over 60 manufacturers, were in two other large tents in front of the Warehouse. Various products, from camouflaged toilet tissue to the latest in compound bows, covered





**BOB ZIMMARO and Leo Lachcik, both of Philadelphia, pay close attention to explanation of compound bow by Bob Aukerman, Liverpool, of Harrisburg Sportsmen's Club.**

the gamut of archery needs for those browsing in between presentations at the main tent.

On the outside, several areas were set aside for archery instruction and commercial demonstrations. Adjacent to the large parking lot was a big bank of animal silhouettes for those wishing to test new equipment or for entertainment and instruction. A walk-through range of 14 targets was available next to the parking area for the convenience of visitors. There was also a short range set up with paper targets.

Instruction at the shooting areas was

provided by members of Harrisburg Sportsmen's Club as well as by manufacturers' representatives. A "Shoot Any Bow" booth permitted visitors to try new bows in an actual shooting situation. Those wishing to check out their own bows could do so at a station established to test arrow velocity by chronograph. At no cost, each person attending was permitted to register for prizes given each hour throughout the festival.

Concession stands provided light refreshments and did a brisk business because of the heat.

During a break in activities, Ed Eckman provided me with a personal tour of Bowhunters Warehouse. The business was started about 20 years ago by Fred Hughes. Under his guidance it grew from a basement operation to a 32,000-square-foot facility that employed up to 80 people at a time. Fred sold the business in 1981 to his son, Shaun, and to the two Eckman brothers, Ed and Dennis. Bowhunters Warehouse continues to grow, and today is one of the leading archery wholesale and retail operations.

Plans are already underway for Super Bow V this year as some of the top names in archery are being booked. The huge crowds still require cooperation of friendly neighbors who operate the parking concessions and permit shooting on their properties. Help and instruction on the grounds will again be provided by members of Harrisburg Sportsmen's Club. Experience has proved that all can be accommodated smoothly because the crowds keep coming and the show keeps growing.

## **Give or Take a Day or Two**

There's nothing new under the sun. Fossils found in Australia show that photosynthesis has been going on a lot longer than scientists once thought — about 700 million years longer! New fossil evidence indicates that blue-green algae were producing oxygen through photosynthesis 3.5 billion years ago. That's just one billion years after the earth was formed.

## **Big Eater**

In a baby robin's first ten days of life, its weight will increase nearly 1000 percent on a steady diet of insects and earthworms.





LEWIS USES BONANZA CO-AX press to load some rifle ammo. Unusual press has universal shellholder. In foreground is Brown Bair III press with C&H swaging dies in place.

## Handloading, Circa 1950

By Don Lewis

**"I'D SURE** like to take up reloading, but I know that at 75, I'm too old. Anyway, I don't have enough gun technical knowledge to understand how to do it safely."

"Why would you make a statement like that?" I asked the gray-haired mathematics teacher. "If you can understand algebra and trigonometry, there's nothing in home reloading you won't be able to master."

"Do you really think I could do it?" A warm smile crossed his face. "I've always wanted to try, but several hunting buddies warned me to stay away from it. Told me it was too technical and also that it was dangerous."

"I was told essentially the same thing

many years ago. The fellow didn't use age for an excuse; he told me only gunsmiths were qualified to handload. That's pure hokum, and you can believe that implicitly."

I invited the teacher to help resize some 22-250 cases on a Bonanza Co-Ax press. I had the cases lubed, and, after several demonstrations on full length resizing, the silver-haired hunter went through the remainder of empties in no time flat. I gave him detailed instructions on how it was necessary to use a smooth rhythm to operate the RCBS automatic priming tool. The object is to seat the primers firmly but gently. Again, he incurred only minor problems. In a matter of minutes he had

inserted a 9½ Remington primer in each case. He was just as quick to learn how to throw powder charges and seat bullets.

To make a long story short, I ended up with two boxes of top 22-250 loads without putting forth much effort. Since my visitor had a 270 Winchester, I dug out some empty brass and took him step by step through all the

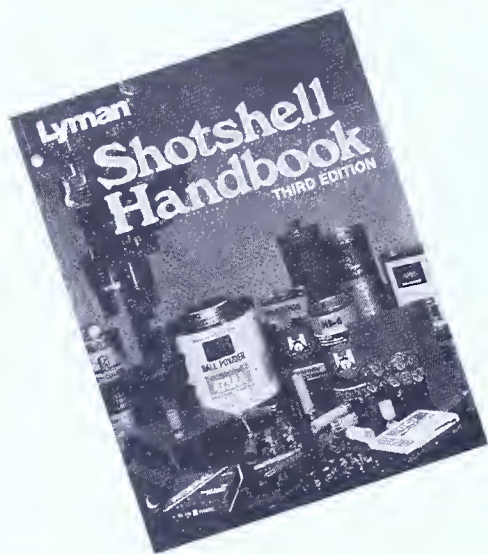
several types of military powders were flooding the market for less than a dollar a pound. I was approached to get in on a ton of 4831 at something around 50 cents a pound. However, many hunters had deep reservations about fooling around with handloads and felt it was better to pay more for factory shells they knew were of high quality.

Little by little, the resistance faded, and thousands of reloading benches were built around the state. The emphasis on saving money would linger for years. Quantity instead of quality spurred most of us on. Some handloaders had inventories of reloaded hunting shells that numbered in the thousands; they filled cases with a passion.

### Pendulum Swung

The pendulum swung in the direction of quality when group shooting and range testing proved to handloaders there was more to reloading than just filling cases. Things that had never been given one iota of attention — such as flash hole measurements, variations in capacities of different brands of cases, neck thickness, alignment of completed round (concentricity), and uniformity in primer seating depth — played important roles on the accuracy road. Handloading became more than a physical exercise to produce reloads on a volume basis; quality became the goal, and it was noted that good handloads are the end result of utilizing good components and research.

To get a top reload, one must know not only how to reload, but also have at least a basic background in internal and external ballistics. This by no means eliminates the handloader who just wants to crank out a few boxes for varmint and deer hunting. I'm bringing to light that doing the job right



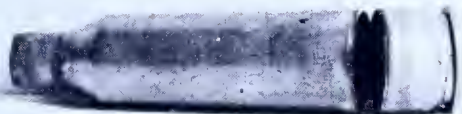
**ALL SERIOUS HANDLOADERS** accumulate manuals to keep abreast of newest data. This is Lyman's book on shotshell loading, long considered a basic reference and now in its third edition.

changes necessary to switch from 22-250s to the old Winchester 270. I detected a quickness in his step several hours later when he left my shop. I don't have to tell you he was already making plans to convert part of his basement into a miniature reloading shop.

When reloading had just begun to infiltrate the general hunting fraternity back in the late 1940s and early '50s, there was an air of suspicion about it. The inducement offered by many reloading manufacturers was "to save money — three reloads for the price of a factory round." This was true, too. Primers and bullets were cheap, and







**A CASE WHICH breaks on firing, such as the one above, can release high pressure gas through the action and cause considerable damage and injury. This illustrates why cases should be examined carefully before reloading. Right, Darrel Lewis checks a shell plate for the RCBs 4 x 4 progressive rifle and handgun press which produces ammo at a high rate.**



takes more than just components, press and dies, and I can explain.

I have pointed out that during the late '40s and early '50s, saving money was the prime consideration. In fact, for many, it was the only motivation. All of us were guilty of buying bargain-type equipment and components. A friend picked up a thousand 50-grain 224 bullets for \$10. Much to his chagrin, he found they were homemade jobs swaged in jackets made from 22 Long Rifle cases, and whoever had made them didn't have the correct tool for straightening out the rims. All in all, they were bad bullets.

### 22 Rimfire Cases

It might come as a surprise to learn that 22 rimfire cases were used extensively in the early days of bullet swaging. Good jackets were hard to come by and expensive, so it didn't take long for advanced reloaders to recognize that fired 22 cases could be an inexpensive answer to their needs. The first necessity was to get rid of those rims. So Ted Smith, and probably others, designed and built dies that could be used in regular reloading tools to do this job. Jackets produced in this way weren't perfect, but they were far better than nothing, and many 224-caliber bullets were produced by swaging lead cores into former rimfire cases.

The modern 22 rimfire case is suitable for making 224 or 6mm jackets,

and Corbin Manufacturing and Supply, Inc., of Phoenix, Oregon, makes a Rimfire Jacket Maker for about \$50. This tool simply swages the rim from the 22 rimfire case. From that point on, it requires special dies and equipment to make 224 bullets along with reloading dies. Average 224 jacket length is 0.705, which makes a 52-grain open tip or a 65-grain lead tip capable of withstanding the forces created by well over 3000 fps.

While modern 22 rimfire cases are no longer made from soft copper nor are they mercuric primed, as some early ones were, they do have thinner walls than commercial jackets and can't be fired at extremely high velocities. The ones I made with Corbin dies and tested in a No. 1 Ruger 22-250 at around 3400 fps shot well below the inch mark at 100 yards, but there were occasional flyers that I was unable to explain. Still, making your own bullets from 22 rimfire jackets adds a new dimension to reloading.

Components have improved significantly over the years. Reloading presses and other gear have become more sophisticated, and today's rifle die sets

are of outstanding quality. Ballistic manuals stuffed with data are in every book store. Today's reload should be unequaled, but that's not always the case. It's a fact that much of any hand-load's quality rests with the person operating the press. There is still a tendency to go for maximum production. This in most cases, shortcuts quality.

Is a primer pocket just a primer pocket? Poor priming plays havoc with accuracy. Shoving the primer in with a quick snap of the press handle is not the way it should be done. If the primer is not seated properly, there is little use in miking or spinning the bullet for concentricity. The quest for the perfect round requires close attention to every aspect in the assembly process.

Handloaders of the late '40s relied a good bit on magazine articles for data. In 1949, *American Rifleman* ran a series of articles to acquaint hunters and shooters with the techniques of reloading. There weren't any Xerox machines back then, but we typed this material and all data we could find on

stencils and ran them on a hand-cranked duplicator.

I still have two manuals that hit the reloading scene in 1950, the *Belding & Mull Handbook* from Belding & Mull of Phillipsburg, Pa., and *Handloading* (an NRA Manual) from Lyman Gun Sight Corp. There were others, including *Why Not Load Your Own*, by Colonel Townsend Whelen, and the encyclopedic *Complete Guide to Handloading* by Philip B. Sharpe, which covered in detail almost every aspect of cartridges and their behavior. It also listed thousands of loads. However, many sport stores took a dim view of home reloading and wouldn't carry handloading equipment or reloading manuals.

### Weighing Changes

Much emphasis was put on weighing powder charges. It was literally preached into every new convert that he should weigh each and every charge to the exact kernel. This was a tedious process, but many handloaders even went so far as to cut the tiny extruded grains. This was unnecessary, but few of us knew that. This was a brand new ball game for most participants.

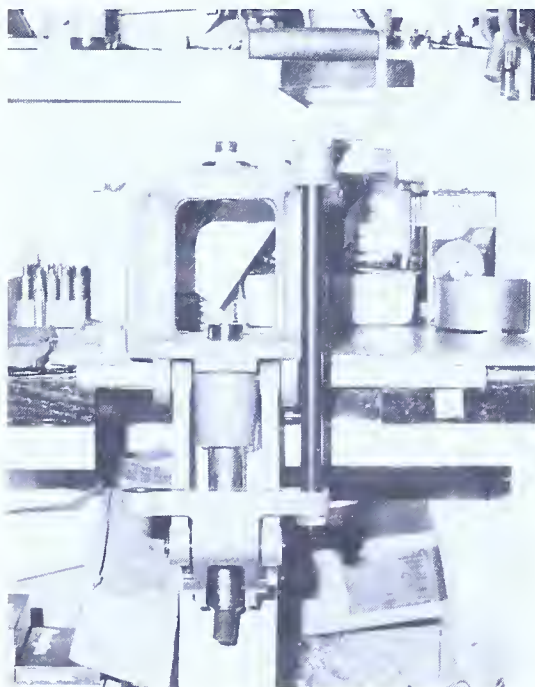
A half kernel of powder simply can't spell the difference between success and failure. More important is the fact that few powder scales are that precise.

I ran a series of tests a few years back with six popular powder scales. My first test was to precisely weigh a 50-grain charge of 4831 powder on one scale and check it on the other five. Variations from scale to scale ran as high as  $\frac{2}{10}$  grain. A 75-grain bullet weighed differently on each scale.

These two tests didn't tell much as I wasn't sure if the powder charge actually weighed 50 grains or the bullet was a true 75 grains.

Finally, a piece of metal of known weight was checked. Not one scale gave a true reading. Apparently, each scale was off plus or minus  $\frac{1}{10}$  to  $\frac{2}{10}$  grain. Worse yet, only two scales consistently gave the same reading on the metal weight. Several varied plus or minus

**THE RCBS A4 press is a massive O-frame tool with compound leverage. It is designed to make easy work of bullet swaging, so of course handles all full length sizing chores with little effort.**





**A HYDRAULIC pump system on this MEC 600 tool takes all the manual effort out of shotshell loading, makes it easy to produce a lot of shells in a short time.**

$\frac{1}{10}$  grain each time the metal was weighed, and much to my surprise, the scale I had put so much faith in for years was the worst offender of all.

There is a tendency to think that carefully weighing every powder charge, seating each primer properly, and having the correct bullet seating depth will produce loads of the same velocity. Well, after a quarter-century of chronographing, I can tell you that isn't the case. Velocity readings of meticulously assembled loads can vary 50 to 75 feet per second. Over that long span of time, while using three different high quality chronographs, my smallest velocity difference in a 5-shot string was 7 fps. That is phenomenal. If I recall correctly, those powder charges were thrown from a measure, not weighed. I'm happy with a 40 fps variation.

During the 1950s, many handloaders were selling all they could load. Ray Mechling, a friend of mine who had a reloading shop in Widnoon at that time, wore out a single stage Herter Model 3 press. While writing this column, I asked Ray how many rifle and handgun rounds he put through his Model 3. He estimated well over 350,000 rounds. That comes out to over a million cycles of the tool handle, as most of Ray's loading was of hand-



gun cartridges, which normally require more than rifle loads. That's a lot of stress and wear. The Model 3 Herter finally wore out, but Ray sure got his money's worth from it. Just in case you wonder where all the empties came from, Ray received orders of up to 100 boxes a month from pistol clubs.

The handloader of the 1980s has superb equipment and voluminous amounts of data. Progressive presses for both rifle and shotshells take much of the work out of reloading. Still, the "three Cs"—care, caution and concern—still apply. While enduring the frigid temperatures and freezing winds of January, give some heavy thought to making 1988 the year you reloaded your first case. You won't ever regret it.

**ED BIELAWSKI, of Warren, a deputy game protector for 43 of his 70 years, is also a top trapshooter, as he proved at the Grand American in Vandalia, Ohio. Ed was one of eight shooters to go 99/100 in the prestigious Grand American Handicap Championship, which attracted more than 4000 shooters from the U.S. and Canada. He settled for eighth place in the shootoff but claimed high veteran honors because he was the oldest competitor.**

Del Ristau, Warren Times-Observer



# *In the wind*

bob mitchell



In 1985 the Oklahoma Wildlife Department launched a bald eagle restoration project and since then 23 have been released. Unlike most other eagle projects, however, in which young birds are taken from their nests, Department biologists collect eggs instead (from Florida). They incubate them and raise the chicks through the nestling and fledgling stages until they are old enough to be released. The procedure seems to be working well, and the Department is planning on releasing up to 75 eagles in a single year. They think such a strategy will more likely result in the establishment of a breeding population than releasing small numbers of birds over many years.

The Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has appointed a 6-member team to evaluate and make recommendations on Federal Aid in Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration programs—those funded by excise taxes on sporting equipment. The team will outline federal-state roles, objectives and strategies that should be followed over the next 5 to 8 years. Their report is due in about a year.

**The American Farmland Trust projects that the Conservation Reserve Program, over its 10-year life span, will save the federal government \$578 million. As reported by the National Association of Conservation Districts, that money represents the difference between CRP payments and those that would have been made through the commodity payment program if crops had been grown on the set aside lands.**

Thanks to a tip from a concerned citizen, a Wyoming man was convicted of poaching a cow moose. He was fined \$1750, lost his hunting privileges through 1989, and received an 18-month jail sentence, all but 30 to 40 days of which were suspended.

Three years ago a group of individuals gathered in Iowa to explore ways to restore the state's pheasant population. As a result, the Iowa Pioneer Chapter of Pheasants Forever, Inc., was formed (there are similar organizations in 14 other states). Since then 54 chapters representing 10,000 members have been organized in the state, and in just two years they've raised \$365,000. Working closely with the state's wildlife department and other conservation agencies, the group uses their funds for land acquisition and a variety of projects designed to provide pheasant habitat on private and public lands.

**The Missouri Department of Conservation is asking the state's archery hunters to help monitor the state's wildlife. Cooperators are sent forms for recording the kinds and numbers of animals they see while hunting. Biologists plan on using the tabulations as indicators of population trends.**

Winchester Ammunition Operations, a division of Olin Corporation, has joined an effort to help reverse the effects of acid rain. Winchester, along with Coleman and Zebco, donated \$5000 and has agreed to contribute portions of sales of selected items to the FishAmerica Foundation, a group active in the reclamation of lakes.

In 1986 almost 600 calls were received on Missouri's Operation Game Thief hot line and they resulted in 200 arrests. Rewards from \$100 to \$1000 are paid for information that leads to an arrest, and \$60,000 has been paid out in rewards since the program began in 1982, although many informants turn down their rewards.





*The Wingless Crow*, by Chuck Fergus, is a collection of thirty-three Thornapples columns which have appeared in **GAME NEWS**. The nearly 200 pages of entertaining reading will appeal to Fergus fans as they reread these selected essays as well as to those who've yet to discover the joys of Thornapples. This top quality hardcover books costs \$10, delivered, and can be ordered from the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept AR, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.



## Outdoor Recreation Maps

To help outdoorsmen discover more of what Pennsylvania has to offer, the Game Commission has produced six "Outdoor Recreation Maps." Each multi-color 24 x 36-inch map covers one of the Commission's field regions. Highlighted are Game Lands, State Forests and Parks, and private lands enrolled in the Commission's public access programs. Also depicted are municipalities, roads, waterways, and – giving the map a three-dimensional appearance – 100-foot contour lines. Maps are printed on Tyvek, a tear-resistant, water-repellent material which will withstand years of hard use. Each regional map costs \$4 delivered, and can be ordered from the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797. If you are not sure of which maps you want, write for a PGC map order form.



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PENNSYLVANIA GAME NEWS (ISSN 0031-451X) is published monthly for \$6.00 per year, \$16.50 for three years, or membership in Pennsylvania's Cooperative Farm-Came Project or Safety Zone Project; to Canada and all other foreign countries, \$7.00 U.S. currency, per year. Published by the Pennsylvania Game Commission, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, Pa. 17110-9797. Phone (717) 787-4250. Second-class postage paid at Harrisburg, Pa. **CHANGE OF ADDRESS: POSTMASTER:** Send both old and new addresses to Pennsylvania Game Commission. Allow six weeks for processing. Material accepted is subject to our requirements for editing and revising. Author payment covers all rights and title to accepted material, including manuscripts, photographs, drawings and illustrations. No information contained in this magazine may be used for advertising or commercial purposes. Copyright © 1988 by the Pennsylvania Game Commission. All rights reserved.

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## Rightful Places

**S**NOWMOBILES, trail bikes, all-terrain vehicles. Some see them as the greatest forms of outdoor recreation since the invention of the wheel; others view them as a scourge on the environment, a constant stress to wildlife and a threat to the well-being of most outdoor enthusiasts.

Spending a crisp winter afternoon sailing over snow covered mountainsides on snowmobiles can be a most enjoyable experience. Having a tranquil springtime hike interrupted by the ear-shattering roar of a passing convoy of 3- and 4-wheel ATVs and trailbikes can ruin the entire day.

The past decade or so has seen a tremendous rise in the use of off-road vehicles. The technology to economically produce "go-anywhere-vehicles," in concert with the increasing popularity of outdoor recreation, have resulted in an almost overnight influx of them on the countryside. They also have created a distinct split among outdoor enthusiasts. People, it seems, either love or despise these machines.

While the excitement of such vehicles is limited to those who have ridden them, their detrimental effects are clearly obvious to nearly everybody. Their deafening noise carries long distances; the winding barren paths they leave in their wakes are eyesores on the countryside; and, since 1982, their use has resulted in over 300,000 serious injuries and almost 700 deaths, mostly young teenagers. The disruptions they cause to wildlife are not nearly as obvious, but it's not hard to recognize that blasting up a wooded ravine in dead of winter, scattering a herd of deer or a flock of turkeys in the process, causes a needless waste of the animals' vital energy reserves.

Off-road vehicles are here to stay, and there's really no reason they shouldn't be, in places where their use is compatible with other purposes. But there are places where they should never tread.

The sudden popularity of off-road vehicles caught lawmakers and natural resource managers off guard, but the vehement opinions people have about these machines did, eventually, result in regulations governing their uses. (If the same were true about acid rain and wetland losses, significant steps would have been taken long ago to rectify those major environmental problems.)

In 1985, for example, regulations were enacted governing ATVs in Pennsylvania. They must be registered with the Department of Environmental Resources Snowmobile/ATV unit, and display a valid registration sticker. Drivers must have attained a certain minimum age, and have landowner permission to legally drive on private land. On State Game Lands, state and national forests, and other public lands, drivers must stick to designated trails and obey specific regulations.

Although regulations are in place, the negative perceptions of machine operators won't change until all drivers show respect for the landowners and other outdoorsmen. Like all other endeavors, it's the irresponsible behavior by a few that influences public opinions.

There are places for off-road vehicles. But there's no place for drivers who show rampant disregard for safety, the landscape, wildlife, or the rights of others who enjoy more tranquil outdoor settings. — *Bob Mitchell*





I WAS hunting squirrels late one afternoon when the fox trotted over a nearby knoll. He was visible for only a few seconds, but long enough for me to get a good look.

## OLD RED

By K. D. Pritts

**T**HERE WAS a definite chill in the air as I climbed out of my car. It was one of those early winter afternoons when the temperature drops faster than the sun in the western sky. A little behind schedule, I was in a hurry to get on stand. A dusting of snow made my brown camo outfit look strangely out of place. I hoped I wouldn't be too conspicuous on the mountain. A 222 with a 4x scope, binoculars and two predator calls rounded out my equipment. I was after a big red fox that frequented this predominately gray fox region, a fox I had dubbed, "Old Red."

I first saw Old Red a little over a year previously. I was hunting squirrels late one afternoon when the fox trotted over a nearby knoll. He was visible for only a few seconds, but long enough for

me to get a good look. I slipped around the ridge and watched him disappear into a jumble of boulders high on the mountain.

I must admit I was surprised to see a red fox that deep in the forest. Reds are usually found near open fields; grays normally roam the forests. Finding a red fox in this mountainous terrain was a novelty, and I immediately planned a hunt on the ridge.

Now, as I climbed the trail, my thoughts flashed back to that same year when I first attempted to bag Old Red. I had called him nearly into range when he unexpectedly circled behind me and disappeared. Although I had done everything right, the cautious red suspected something and circled to catch my scent on the breeze. The experience made him even more wary. I



I SLOWLY raised the rifle, found the fox in the crosshairs, and squeezed off a shot. When the rifle barked Old Red jumped straight up into the air.

took several grays on subsequent hunts, but was unable to interest Old Red again.

A year had since passed and I hoped the memory of the previous hunt had faded. Perhaps today the fox would be hungry enough to lose some of his caution.

As my thoughts returned to the present I realized I was walking too fast. In my haste to get on stand I was working up a sweat. I had to tell myself to slow down. Old Red's keen sense of smell had defeated me once and I didn't want to spook him again.

### Patchwork Pattern

The powdery snow was heavier in places higher on the ridge. Leaves, logs and boulders protruding through the thin white film formed a patchwork pattern on the forest floor. I stopped to check a set of tracks crossing the trail. A deer had meandered through, perhaps only moments before. Farther up the trail, two more sets of deer tracks were visible. If the deer were moving early this evening, maybe Old Red was also on the prowl. I took it as a good omen.

High on the mountain I chose a stand behind some low mountain laurel that offered a commanding view of the area where I had first seen Old Red. I stood silent for several minutes to check the wind direction and allow the forest to return to its normal routine. My intrusion inevitably had caused some disturbance, so I wanted

to wait a while before calling. When a curious squirrel rustled through the leaves, I was ready to begin.

I use two calls for predators, one a long range call, the other for short range. The former is quite loud and attracts predators from as far as a mile away. The short range call is much softer. In theory, the hunter attracts predators from a great distance with the long range call and then switches to the other when the animals get close. I decided to use only the short range call this evening. It was getting late and I felt it useless to wait for a fox responding from a long distance. Also, I was afraid the different tones of the two calls might make the smart red suspicious.

The predator call imitates the squeals of a rabbit in distress, yet it never ceases to amaze me that anything could be attracted to the racket it produces. It is quite effective, however, and I have called in everything from mice to deer. Today, I was hoping that nothing but Old Red would appear. A few nervous deer in the area can make a suspicious fox downright jumpy.

I called loudly for a few minutes, trying as best I could to sound like a wounded rabbit. Then I stopped for a few minutes as though the rabbit were resting. That technique had proven effective on grays and I was confident it would work on a red.

The first response came from a blue jay that appeared out of nowhere and began scolding. If there was one thing I didn't need, it was a blue jay telling all the world I was there. I remained as still as possible and began calling again, hoping any approaching fox would think the jay was screeching at a rabbit rather than a hunter.

I repeated the sequence of squeals and silence several times, with no apparent results. Finally, even the blue jay lost interest and disappeared.



I decided to try another spot before dark, but as I stood up a movement far down on the ridge caught my eye. I looked through the binoculars, but the movement had ceased. I sat down and squealed a few more times, very softly. A red fox appeared.

I watched with absolute fascination as I coaxed the fox toward me. Every time I gave a few soft squeals, he crouched and stared intently at my position. When I stopped calling, he moved rapidly toward me, so low to the ground he seemed to be crawling. Each time I called he stopped and stared. Each time I was quiet he moved cautiously toward me.

When the fox was 75 yards away what I feared most happened. He swung wide, nose to the air, trying to catch a scent. It was a repeat of the previous year's performance.

I agonized over what to do. There was too much brush for a clear shot and the fox would scent me sooner or later. I decided to move.

Moving while a fox is approaching is normally a sure way to go home empty-handed, but it was my only option under the circumstances. Perhaps the brush would obscure the fox's vision enough to conceal me.

Jumping from boulder to boulder, I climbed rapidly but silently into the wind. About 35 yards from my stand I slipped on a rock and had to jump to the forest floor. I landed with a distinct thump. It was enough to send any self-respecting wild critter into the next county. I was disgusted, yet I didn't move a muscle. Years earlier I had learned that it didn't matter if I sounded like a herd of squirrels running through the forest, so long as the other animals thought it was a herd of



squirrels. Maybe the fox would dismiss the noise as a natural sound.

Seconds hung like hours as I waited for the answer. Suddenly, the red fox appeared in front of me, quartering across the breeze. Incredibly, he was slinking directly toward my first stand near the laurel. I slowly raised the rifle, found the fox in the crosshairs, and squeezed off a shot. When the rifle barked Old Red jumped straight up into the air. For a moment I thought I had missed an easy shot, but when he landed he crumpled.

More than one fox will occasionally respond to a call, so I gave several more squeals before moving. I thought I saw a flash of red below me and had visions of Old Red disappearing over the bench. A quick look through the scope revealed the fox lying where I'd last seen him.

I decided to pick up Old Red and leave. As I admired the fox's silky red coat and graying muzzle, a sharp high-pitched bark echoed across the ridge. I couldn't help but wonder if there wasn't another red ready to take the place of the old warrior at my feet. Perhaps, on another day, in another year, I would find yet another crafty red on the mountain.

## Thoughts While Walking

*People who live dangerously have to think seriously about death. It heightens the sensual awareness of just breathing.*

—Guy Coheleach

**S**NOWSHOES to the Mohawk, Onondaga, and Ojibway were a means of survival. To the fur trapper in the Canadian wilderness, they were as important as his traps. To the Pennsylvania sportsman of today, snowshoes can provide an avenue to continued outdoor adventure long after the curtain has rung down on the fall and winter hunting seasons.

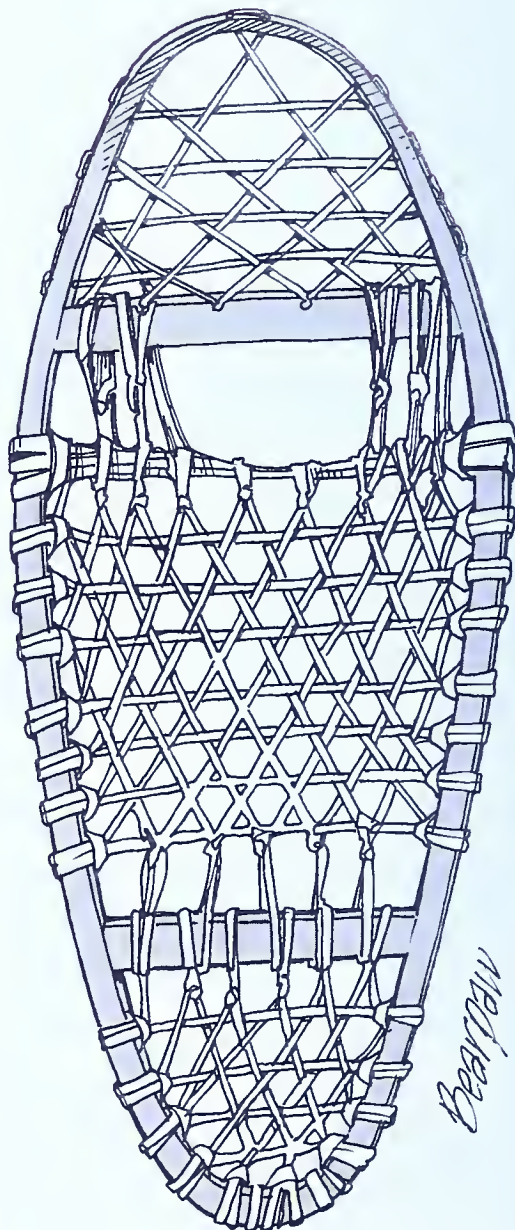
I enjoy being in the woods at any time. Snowshoeing in the heart of winter allows me further recreation in the environment that I love. For as far back as I can remember, I have looked forward to winter hikes over frozen mountains, across iced-in beaver dams and through an occasional mountain meadow where, after a heavy snow, no man had traveled for days and sometimes even weeks. The feeling of crossing an unspoiled carpet of snow can be fully appreciated only by a person who has done it. I can compare it only to scuba diving, where there is silent wonderment about an environment in which there is no evidence of anyone having been there before, an environment that has grown foreign to many modern outdoorsmen. I am not one to deny another his sport, but in my opinion to blur through the forest on an ear-splitting, smoke-belching snow machine is to deny oneself a bond to the ancient peoples who long ago traversed the same hills and crossed the same streams.

One icy starlit night a few years ago, my friend Dan Thornton and I were snowshoeing on State Game Lands 219 in northeastern Bradford County. It had snowed heavily the day before and conditions were just too good not to be in the woods. A clear sky and full moon made it as bright and cold as it could possibly be. The full moon, a fresh unbroken snow, and a temperature about 10 below zero contributed to one of the most memorable evenings of my life.

Each step Dan and I took across the glistening carpet sounded as if someone were squeezing a box of corn starch. Every breath hung in the cold night air, seeming to freeze and shatter with each

# Snow Walking

**By Mike Raykovicz**





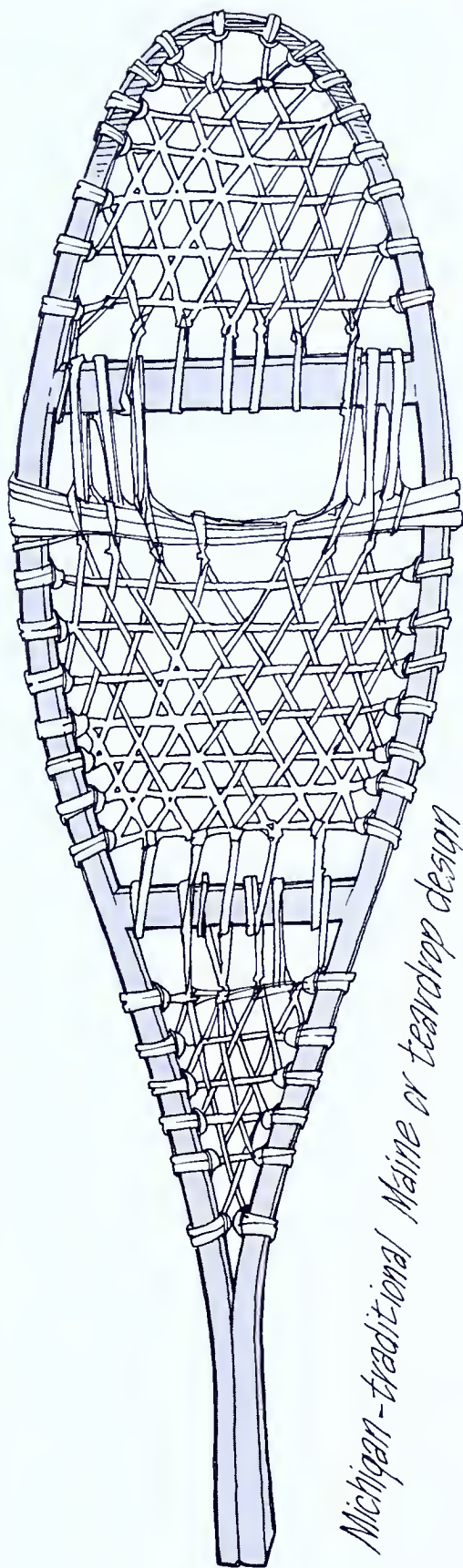
passing step. Tree trunks snapped and creaked like the tall masts of an ancient sailing vessel. But cold as it was, the night was alive with what seemed like a thousand pairs of eyes. A fresh deer track was the first evidence we were not alone in the forest. Moving along we encountered tracks of squirrel, raccoon, and skunk. Each creature was afield for its own reason, and we were privileged to read the stories of survival written in the snow.

Dan and I walked without speaking, alone with our thoughts on a night that could have meant our very survival just a few generations before. I don't know about Dan, but for me Game Lands 219 did not exist. I was in the Chugach Mountains outside of Valdez in the south of Alaska. I was crossing Yellow Woman creek, reckoning the way to Auktuk where safety, lodging and a warm fire would be waiting. Only a few more miles to go and we could rest.

### The Truth Is

Of course, my thoughts were only fantasy. The truth is, snowshoeing can be anything you want it to be. It can be excellent outdoor aerobic exercise, or just a leisurely stroll through the neighborhood woodlot. Snowshoeing appeals to the "rugged individualist" in many of us. It does not require fancy equipment; in fact, most snowshoe designs have been known for hundreds if not thousands of years. Snowshoeing does not require that we drive hundreds of miles to enjoy a day's outing. The snowshoer is not required to stand in long lines to be lifted to some lofty peak. Finally, with a few basic pointers, virtually anyone can learn to snowshoe without expensive lessons.

The elementary idea of the snowshoe is to increase the area over which our body weight is distributed across the surface of the snow. Any high school physics student knows that the greater the area over which a weight is spread, the less of the weight each square inch of the surface must support. It makes little sense to buy snowshoes that are not reasonably well



*Michigan - traditional Maine or teardrop design*

matched to body weight. Most dealers who sell snowshoes can recommend the proper length and width 'shoe. Outdoor catalogs have a weight recommendation for each style of shoe they sell. Consult the charts and you won't be far off.

There are a number of different snowshoe styles and construction materials. Choice can be bewildering for the novice, especially since each style and material has its advantages as well as its drawbacks. For my money, the traditional Maine or Michigan design is the only one most people should consider for occasional recreational use. This teardrop-shape shoe has an upturned toe with a tail which helps keep it pointed in a straight line. The upturned toe allows the walker to "ski" down slight grades, and yet allows good uphill advantage by not permitting the toe to be buried in deep snow. This style also gives considerable mobility when walking through timber and smaller trees. After the snows melt those 'shoes also look great on the den wall.

### Other Basic Styles

Other basic snowshoe styles are the pickerel or Yukon style and the bearpaw. The pickerel is longer and narrower than the style just described. Its narrowness allows the beginner to walk more naturally and is faster on open ground. However, when traveling through wooded or brushy areas or up or down hills, this style is a disadvantage. The length simply gets in the way most of the time. They can be "skied" fairly well down hills but uphill mobility is sometimes rather difficult. It is hard to maneuver around stumps, cross gullies, or go up steep hills with a shoe this long. Consider the pickerel only if most of your snowshoeing will be done in fairly open country.

The bearpaw style is short and stubby. It is oval shaped and has no tail to aid in tracking. Unlike the Michigan and pickerel styles, its toe lies flat on the snow rather than being upturned. The bearpaw is the snowshoe of the

working woodsman. The trapper, the woodcutter, and the maple syrup gatherer all have an affinity for this style. The bearpaw is at home in thick brush and woods. It allows the user to get close to his work and, hence, has a more utilitarian than recreational use. The bear paw can be used for walking, but going up or down hills might be a problem.

Other styles of snowshoes are available, but they are variations of the three types described. Each is quite good for its intended use. For the beginner, however, one of the three basic designs should prove most satisfactory.

Snowshoes are made from varied materials. Each has its advantages and drawbacks. The wise sportsman considers the alternatives. The traditional snowshoe constructed of ash and rawhide can last for many seasons if cared for properly. The more modern aluminum and neoprene snowshoe lasts just as long and requires little or no maintenance.

Rawhide, like wood, is porous and can absorb water. If it doesn't get a good treatment of marine or spar varnish, it will sag and ultimately prove useless. I allow my 'shoes to dry naturally (not near a source of intense heat) after each use. If I've used them heavily for several days, I may give them a coat of spar varnish once they've dried. Such midseason maintenance has kept my Michigans looking virtually brand new. More functionally, however, the varnish seals the pores of the wooden frame and keeps the rawhide taut.

Many sporting goods stores now carry aluminum-frame, neoprene-webbed snowshoe. Neoprene is a synthetic rubberlike plastic formed by the polymerization of chloroprene. Unlike rawhide it will not absorb water and sag when used on snow for extended periods of time. It is just about as maintenance free a material as can be found for webbing. However, its resistance to use—or, more appropriately, its abrasion resistance—is not as good as is rawhide's. Because of its elasticity, it cannot be woven as taut as rawhide



lacing. Worst of all, neoprene is very slippery in wet snow. A newer type with nylon cord impregnated in the neoprene seems to have solved the stretch problem.

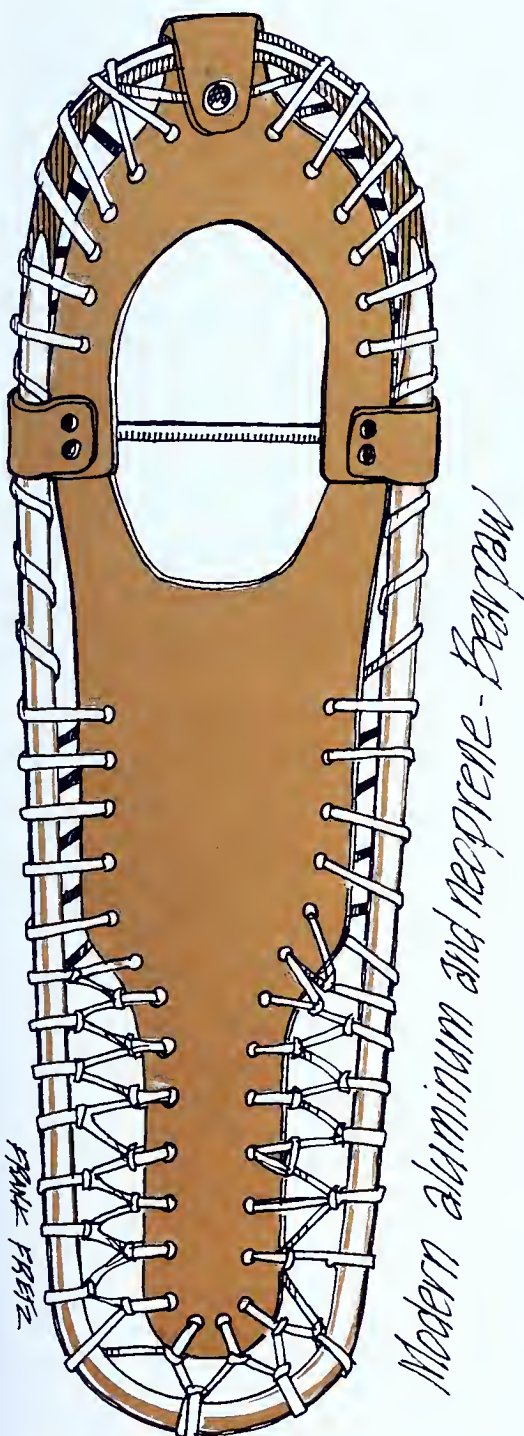
I have seen at least one other type of webbing on the market. This webbing is constructed of nylon rope woven into a wood that appears inferior to the ash traditionally used in the rawhide-laced snowshoe. A friend who bought a pair said the nylon sagged excessively when wet and was virtually impossible to cover with a protective coat of varnish.

It is not difficult to decide on the type of snowshoe that best meets your requirements. Like the cheap rifle scope that often fogs when exposed to humidity, it's hardly worth saving the few extra bucks when quality is sacrificed. Buy whatever suits your fancy or your needs, but be sure to buy quality.

### Bindings

Once you have made the decision to buy snowshoes, you must also buy something to keep them on your feet. Bindings come in many different styles and materials. Most have a buckle of some sort fitted to the heel strap. I prefer one that has "notches" into which fits the "pin" on the buckle. This arrangement is similar to the belt buckle on a man's pants. It is a positive lock-up. Once the strap is snugged up and the pin is inserted into the hole, it is unlikely that the arrangement will work loose while walking. The boot must also be secured by a toe binding, and the same type of buckle arrangement is recommended. Avoid the type that secures the toe with a leather lace much like a shoe lace. When it's colder than a witch's heart, tying on snowshoes with half-frozen fingers will make you want to quit before you've even started. In addition, leather laces lose strength when wet and are likely to break if pulled too tight.

There are many types of bindings on the market, so you should discuss your needs with the sporting goods salesperson. Again, if you have some idea of what you want and are willing to pay a



few extra dollars for quality, it's likely you will be satisfied with the results.

One of the most appealing things about snowshoeing is that it's so easy to learn. When first walking on snowshoes, begin by taking natural strides with each foot. Avoid the novice's first instinct to walk bowlegged. This is unnecessary and can lead to leg pains which the French call "mal de raquette." The only slightly exaggerated motion from normal walking the novice should make is to be sure to "lift" the shoe over the one implanted in the snow. Placing one foot in front of the other is all there is to it. Turns are relatively easy. If you've ever skied, you are familiar with the "kick turn." If you haven't, don't fret. It's easy. To turn right, simply lift your right leg, turn it 90 degrees outward, follow with your left shoe, and you've done it. Moderate hills can usually be climbed by going straight up. Steeper hills, however, require an upward zigzag or traverse method. Going back and forth across a

steep hill will get you to the top with little difficulty. The main thing is to make certain the snowshoes rest horizontally when planted in position. If this is not done, the bindings can work loose or, worse yet, the ankles will soon tire and produce discomfort.

After only a few outings the novice will begin to feel like an expert. There is no reason he shouldn't. Snowshoeing is easy!

Next winter, look forward to a deep snow as I have learned to do. Walk through the lovely woods. Become aware of the silence to which most of us have grown unaccustomed. Sit and rest beside a large pine and breathe in the pure winter air. Perhaps you will be moved by the sights and sounds of the forest in winter as was Robert Frost when he wrote:

The woods are lovely, dark and deep  
But I have promises to keep  
And miles to go before I sleep.  
And miles to go before I sleep.

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# *Hunting in Northeastern Pennsylvania*

By Ed Sherlinski  
IES, Northeast Region

**N**ORTHEASTERN Pennsylvania is a land of great contrasts, from the gutted terrain of stripmines to some of the state's most picturesque scenes of white birch, blue lakes and moss-covered woodland floors. The Northeast is a land of mountains, meadows, deep forested woodlands, and farms planted to corn and wheat. This diversified habitat produces much wildlife and offers sportsmen a variety of big and small game hunting. The Northeast is home to deer, bear, snowshoe hares and cottontails. It has turkeys, grouse and pheasants, woodcock, doves and waterfowl. This corner of the commonwealth is a paradise for

the sportsman who likes to hunt a variety of game in settings that resemble all types of habitat from the farm areas of the Midwest to the wilds of Canada.







**BEAVERS, muskrats, mink and raccoons abound in the marshes, lakes and waterways that characterize the Northeast.**

The Game Commission's Northeast Region includes 13 counties bordered on the north by New York and on the east by New Jersey. This part of Pennsylvania offers many recreational activities, including the popular Pocono resorts. Nevertheless, the influx of non-residents doesn't end on Labor Day. Fall and winter hunting seasons attract sportsmen from all over the eastern United States.

The white-tailed deer, plentiful in the Northeast, is the most popular game species. The best nourished animals with the largest racks generally come from the dairy and timber-cutting counties of Susquehanna, Wyoming and Bradford. Smaller deer seem to come from Pike, Wayne and Monroe counties, where large private land holdings are closed to public hunting. As a result, the deer population in many of these areas is high, food supplies are limited and, therefore, the deer don't fully develop.

Another popular game animal in the Northeast is the black bear. The Northeast Region is second only to the North-central in annual bear harvests. Pike

County is usually the leader, but Monroe and Sullivan are good, too. Some years ago, four Luzerne County brothers — hunting independently — killed four bears at various spots in the Northeast during the same season. Although this is a rare occurrence, it indicates the kind of bear hunting available in this part of Pennsylvania.

In the early 1940s there were practically no turkeys in the Northeast; today they are plentiful in many areas. Sullivan is tops, with Wyoming, Bradford, Luzerne, Pike, Monroe and Lackawanna also supporting good numbers of the big birds.

Another popular small game animal in the Northeast is the cottontail rabbit. Leading rabbit counties are Bradford and Susquehanna, with Carbon, Luzerne, Columbia, Northumberland and Montour following closely. Good numbers of cottontails are found on State Game Lands as well as private tracts. Two Northeast SGLs are specifically managed for the rabbit; 219 in Bradford County and 226 in Columbia County.

Grouse hunters will find all North-



# STATE GAME LANDS IN NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

| County         | Tract | Nearest Town   | Acreage | Game                       |
|----------------|-------|----------------|---------|----------------------------|
| Bradford       | 12    | Canton         | 23,289  | Deer, Bear, Turkey         |
|                | 36    | Towanda        | 18,929  | Deer, Bear, Turkey         |
|                | 123   | Gillette       | 1,543   | Rabbit, Grouse, Waterfowl  |
|                | 142   | New Albany     | 369     | Deer, Grouse, Rabbit       |
|                | 172   | Wyalusing      | 722     | Rabbit, Grouse, Deer       |
|                | 219   | Warren Center  | 5,618   | Rabbit, Deer, Grouse       |
|                | 237   | Wysox          | 115     | Waterfowl, Woodcock        |
|                | 239   | Athens         | 670     | Waterfowl, Rabbit          |
|                | 240   | Monroeton      | 928     | Deer, Grouse, Raccoon      |
|                | 250   | Wyalusing      | 443     | Waterfowl, Rabbit          |
| Carbon         | 289   | Burlington     | 1,552   | Deer, Grouse, Turkey       |
|                | 40    | White Haven    | 6,118   | Deer, Grouse, Turkey       |
|                | 129   | Lake Harmony   | 2,780   | Deer, Grouse, Bear         |
|                | 141   | Jim Thorpe     | 17,047  | Deer, Turkey, Grouse       |
|                | 168   | Lehighton      | 45      | Deer, Small Game           |
| Columbia       | 217   | Lehighton      | 347     | Deer, Small Game           |
|                | 13    | Central        | 998     | Deer, Bear, Turkey         |
|                | 55    | Orangeville    | 2,474   | Deer, Grouse               |
|                | 58    | Catawissa      | 12,538  | Deer, Grouse, Squirrel     |
| Lackawanna     | 226   | Millville      | 4,335   | Small Game, Deer           |
|                | 91    | Springbrook    | 1,499   | Deer, Bear                 |
|                | 135   | Gouldsboro     | 3,430   | Deer, Grouse, Bear         |
| Luzerne        | 300   | Carbondale     | 3,984   | Deer, Grouse, Bear         |
|                | 57    | Red Rock       | 8,263   | Deer, Bear, Turkey         |
|                | 91    | Bear Creek     | 14,390  | Deer, Bear, Grouse         |
|                | 119   | Mountain Top   | 7,963   | Deer, Bear, Grouse         |
|                | 149   | White Haven    | 1,334   | Deer, Grouse, Squirrel     |
|                | 187   | White Haven    | 8,186   | Deer, Rabbit, Woodcock     |
|                | 206   | Sweet Valley   | 1,524   | Deer, Grouse, Turkey       |
|                | 207   | Mountain Top   | 1,400   | Deer, Grouse, Turkey       |
|                | 224   | Hunlock        | 533     | Rabbit, Grouse             |
|                | 260   | Shickshinny    | 3,061   | Deer, Rabbit, Squirrel     |
| Monroe         | 292   | Wilkes-Barre   | 624     | Deer, Grouse               |
|                | 38    | Tannersville   | 5,837   | Deer, Grouse, Bear         |
|                | 127   | Tobyhanna      | 25,527  | Deer, Grouse, Bear         |
|                | 129   | Lake Harmony   | 738     | Deer, Grouse               |
|                | 168   | Kunkletown     | 691     | Bear, Small Game           |
|                | 186   | Bartonsville   | 967     | Rabbit, Grouse, Squirrel   |
| Montour        | 221   | Cresco         | 4,618   | Deer, Turkey, Grouse       |
|                | 115   | Danville       | 227     | Deer, Grouse, Rabbit       |
|                | 84    | Trevorton      | 8,154   | Deer, Grouse, Squirrel     |
| Northumberland | 115   | Danville       | 1,015   | Deer, Small Game           |
|                | 165   | Trevorton      | 1,189   | Deer, Grouse, Rabbit       |
|                | 233   | Herndon        | 377     | Waterfowl Refuge           |
|                | 116   | Lackawaxen     | 3,023   | Deer, Bear, Grouse         |
| Pike           | 180   | Greeley        | 11,372  | Deer, Grouse, Turkey       |
|                | 183   | Tafton         | 2,778   | Deer, Grouse, Turkey       |
|                | 209   | Shohola        | 4,391   | Deer, Grouse, Bear         |
| Sullivan       | 12    | Wheelerville   | 1,189   | Deer, Bear, Turkey, Grouse |
|                | 13    | Sonestown      | 45,529  | Deer, Turkey, Grouse       |
|                | 66    | Lopez          | 7,879   | Deer, Grouse, Turkey       |
| Susquehanna    | 134   | Hillsgrove     | 2,585   | Deer, Bear, Turkey, Grouse |
|                | 35    | Hallstead      | 7,739   | Deer, Grouse, Raccoon      |
|                | 70    | Stevens Point  | 2,596   | Deer, Turkey, Grouse       |
|                | 140   | Friendsville   | 1,244   | Deer, Rabbit, Grouse       |
|                | 175   | New Milford    | 736     | Rabbit, Deer, Grouse       |
| Wayne          | 236   | Herrick Center | 2,009   | Waterfowl, Rabbit          |
|                | 70    | Susquehanna    | 3,766   | Deer, Grouse, Rabbit       |
|                | 159   | Lookout        | 9,367   | Deer, Grouse, Rabbit       |
|                | 299   | Starlight      | 944     | Deer, Grouse, Turkey       |
|                | 300   | Archbald       | 90      | Deer, Grouse               |
| Wyoming        | 57    | Noxen          | 28,242  | Deer, Turkey, Bear         |
|                | 66    | Dushore        | 30      | Deer, Turkey, Bear         |

# **FARM GAME COOPERATIVE PROGRAM IN NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA**

| <i>County</i>  | <i>Acreage</i> | <i>Number<br/>of Farms</i> |
|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Bradford       | 14,544         | 79                         |
| Carbon         | 983            | 6                          |
| Columbia       | 13,892         | 145                        |
| Luzerne        | 15,193         | 159                        |
| Monroe         | 10,935         | 108                        |
| Montour        | 10,260         | 67                         |
| Northumberland | 66,716         | 741                        |
| Susquehanna    | 41,277         | 256                        |
| Wayne          | 734            | 8                          |
| Wyoming        | 9,258          | 46                         |

east counties good except for the farm areas of Northumberland, Columbia and Montour, although even in these areas there are some grouse hotspots. Most experts feel that learning to identify good grouse habitat is the single biggest factor in successfully hunting the partridge.

The Northeast offers the state's best woodcock hunting. Numerous lakes, marshes and rivers provide excellent habitat for migrating timberdoodles. Sullivan is the top county, but Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe and Pike

will often produce fast and furious woodcock action, too.

The snowshoe hare is another game animal that calls the Northeast home. The region's extensive swamps provide ample room and excellent cover for the wide ranging yet secretive animals, making them a most challenging quarry for hunters and hounds.

Many hunters try for squirrels in the Northeast, just as other Pennsylvanians do throughout the state. Good populations of grays exist throughout the region; a few black squirrels may be found in Bradford and Sullivan counties.

The best pheasant habitat in the Northeast is in the farming areas of Northumberland, Montour, Columbia, southern Monroe, southern Carbon, and southern Luzerne counties. Pheasants are stocked throughout the Northeast counties, but very little natural reproduction occurs here.

Doves are found in the above pheasant counties and also in southern Lackawanna. These are mainly local populations that move out soon after the September season opens.

Woodchuck hunting is good throughout the region, especially in the pastures of Bradford, Susquehanna and Wayne. Chucks also show up in the farming areas of Northumberland, Montour and Columbia counties.

The Northeast is second only to the Northwest when it comes to waterfowling in Pennsylvania. Rivers, ponds, lakes, beaver dams and marshes are common in the Northeast and provide excellent habitat for ducks and geese.

The commonwealth's major waterfowl flyway is located across eastern rather than western Pennsylvania. Two islands in the Susquehanna River in Bradford County, State Game Lands 237, lie along the flyway. This SGL is



**GROUSE** coverts are many in the Northeast, especially in the region's forested areas. The secret in finding them, of course, is being able to recognize good grouse habitat.



**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES  
LANDS OPEN TO PUBLIC HUNTING  
IN NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA**

| <i>County</i> | <i>Name</i>                        | <i>Location</i>                      | <i>Acreage<br/>Open to<br/>Hunting</i> |
|---------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Bradford      | Tioga State Forest                 | North of Canton                      | 3,838                                  |
| Carbon        | Weiser State Forest                | East of Christmans                   | 995                                    |
|               | Hickory Run State Park             | East of White Haven                  | 15,398                                 |
| Lackawanna    | Lackawanna State Forest            | West of Thornhurst                   | 6,024                                  |
| Luzerne       | Lackawanna State Forest            | West of Plymouth                     | 1,416                                  |
|               | Ricketts Glen State Park           | Rte. 118 at Redrock                  | 8,085                                  |
| Monroe        | Delaware State Forest              | Tannersville & Canadensis            | 8,637                                  |
|               | Tobyhanna-Gouldsboro<br>State Park | Rte. 611 at Tobyhanna                | 5,485                                  |
|               | Big Pocono State Park              | NW of 611 at Tannersville            | 1,017                                  |
| Pike          | Delaware State Forest              | Porter's Lake, Tafton,<br>Twin Lakes | 62,983                                 |
|               | Promised Land State Park           | Rte. 390 N. of Canadensis            | 1,450                                  |
| Sullivan      | Wyoming State Forest               | Forksville, Hillsgrove               | 39,013                                 |
|               | Worlds End State Park              | Rte. 154 SE of Forksville            | 920                                    |
| Wayne         | Prompton Reservoir State<br>Park   | 4 miles E. of Honesdale on Rte. 170  | 850                                    |
| Wyoming       | Lackawanna State Forest            | Eatonville                           | 1,273                                  |

closed to hunting and is used for resting and feeding by migrating waterfowl.

Additional Game Commission waterfowl development is underway in Bradford, Susquehanna, Wayne, Sullivan and Pike counties. State Game Lands 180, in Pike County, provides excellent waterfowl hunting, as well as propagation, resting and feeding areas for ducks and geese.

Although the Susquehanna River is a favorite haunt of duck and goose hunters, waterfowlers also find action on beaver dams throughout the Northeast. Back-country hotspots for waterfowl are common in Bradford, Susquehanna, Wayne, Sullivan, Wyoming, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Montour and Pike counties.

The well-known lakes of the Northeast may appear to be good duck hunting spots, but the lack of food and cover—due to unsuitable soils—precludes any large duck concentrations. Waterfowl use these lakes mainly as resting areas during their migrations.

No article about the Northeast is complete without mention of the area's outstanding fur trapping. The wetlands of the northern and eastern coun-

ties of the region produce large numbers of muskrat, mink and beaver. Among the top counties are Monroe, Pike, Wayne, Susquehanna and Bradford.

A relief map helps explain why so many wildlife species are found in the Northeast. This 13-county section has three major geographical areas: the dairy and grazing lands of Bradford, Susquehanna, northern Wayne and northern Wyoming counties; the deep forested counties of Monroe, Pike, Sullivan, Wyoming and western Luzerne; and the farming-agricultural areas of Columbia, Montour and Northumberland. Lackawanna County has characteristics of all three ecologies. Each geographic area produces its own type of upland and big game hunting.

The major drainages of the Northeast are the West and North Branches of the Susquehanna River and the Delaware River. Larger lakes include Wallenpaupack in Wayne and Pike counties, Harvey's in Luzerne (second largest natural lake in the state), Bear Creek Reservoir in Luzerne and Carbon counties, and Prompton Reservoir in Wayne County.



**DEER, BEAR, turkey and small game—no matter what your favorite type of hunting, you can probably enjoy it in the Northeast.**

forests and fields are open to public hunting in this corner of the state.

The 56 tracts of State Game Lands totaling over 340,000 acres are more than are found in any of the Commission's five other field regions (see table for locations, acreages and game species found on Northeast SGLs).

The Game Commission's Farm Game Program in the area totals 183,792 acres on 1615 farms. The Safety Zone Program there offers 261,173 acres on 1417 tracts open to the hunter (see tables for county breakdown). Both of these programs are based on signed agreements with landowners who open their lands to public hunting; safety zone signs are erected on the edge of the 150-yard closed hunting area surrounding houses and farm buildings. Cooperators also receive special law enforcement attention and a GAME NEWS subscription.

Finally, 157,384 acres are owned by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources in the Northeast. This land is composed of State Forests and State Parks (see table for names and locations). Except for small areas posted as safety zones for the protection of those using the recreation facilities, all these lands are open to hunters and furtakers.

No matter what your favorite type of hunting, you can probably enjoy it in the Northeast. Those familiar with the region will testify that a hunting trip to Pennsylvania's land of lakes usually results in a rare and enjoyable experience. Whatever you are looking for, the Northeast has it in just about any setting your heart desires.

### **SAFETY ZONE PROGRAM IN NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA**

| <i>County</i>  | <i>Acreage</i> | <i>Number<br/>of Farms</i> |
|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Bradford       | 95,322         | 538                        |
| Carbon         | 37,842         | 87                         |
| Columbia       | 16,641         | 130                        |
| Lackawanna     | 14,697         | 100                        |
| Luzerne        | 20,527         | 176                        |
| Monroe         | 433            | 6                          |
| Montour        | 7,253          | 53                         |
| Northumberland | 11,019         | 44                         |
| Pike           | 85             | 1                          |
| Sullivan       | 12,648         | 47                         |
| Susquehanna    | 20,450         | 89                         |
| Wayne          | 13,314         | 90                         |
| Wyoming        | 10,942         | 56                         |

Fortunately, with all its wildlife resources, the Northeast has a lot of land open to public hunting. Unlike the metropolitan areas of the Southeast and Southwest, the Northeast still has considerable wild country, a substantial amount of which is set aside as State Forests, State Parks and State Game Lands. Nearly a million acres of





**IF YOU** burn wood, yours is among some 23 million households across the nation, each using an average of about two cords annually, according to the U.S. Department of energy.

# About Firewood

**By Eugene R. Slatick**

**I**N THESE TIMES of electronic wizardry, a simple wood fire can be enchanting. With its soft crackling and soothing warmth, a well-made wood fire can be a tonic for today's busy person. The burning wood captures the gaze and opens the mind to pleasant thoughts.

In early America, wood was the major source of heat, but over the years it lost favor as other fuels became available. The energy crises of the early 1970s renewed our interest in wood, and many people discovered they enjoyed a wood fire.

If you burn wood, you are among some 23 million households across the nation, each using an average of about 2 cords annually, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. If wood is your major source of heat, you are in the company of more than 6 million house-

holds, each consuming about 5 cords per year. In 1981, Pennsylvanians burned an estimated 2.6 to 3.1 million cords of firewood, ranking the state among the top in residential fuelwood consumption.

Selecting and burning firewood is an art that develops with time. But a few basic things are worth knowing about firewood.

## Basic Measurement

First, the basic measurement for firewood is the standard (or full) cord. This is a wood pile stacked 4 by 4 by 8 feet and amounting to 128 cubic feet in volume. Because of air spaces in the pile, a standard cord actually contains about 80 cubic feet of wood.

Wood is also sold by the "face cord," which is also known as a "short cord," "rick cord," "run cord," or "tier." It



measures 4 by 8 feet, with each piece of wood 1 to 2 feet long, the size usually burned. A face cord with 16-inch-long firewood is one-third of a standard cord. If the wood is in 2-foot lengths, the amount equals half of a standard cord.

Another way of measuring firewood is the "unit," which is 2 by 2 feet by 16 inches. The amount of wood in a "truckload" depends on the size of the truck. A standard pickup generally holds no more than one-third to one-half of a standard cord.

Anyone who has stacked wood knows that some kinds are heavier than others. The weight of wood varies widely, depending upon the wood and weather it is green or dry. Weight also can vary for the same type of wood

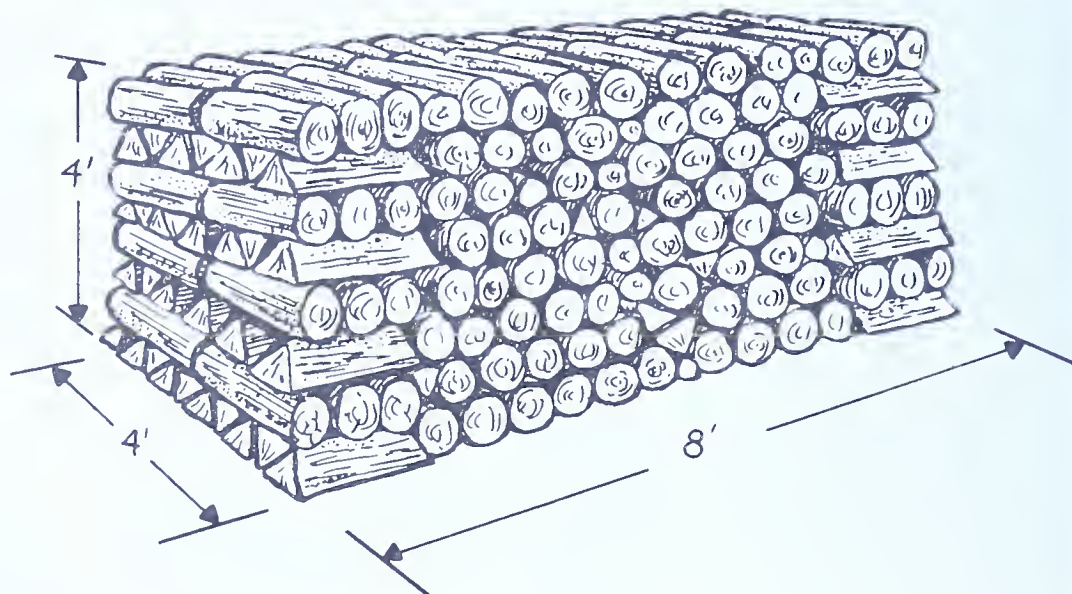
because of different growing conditions. But on average, a standard cord of wood weighs about 3000 pounds (1½ tons) when dry and about 4000 pounds (2 tons) when wet. More specifically, a standard cord of seasoned white pine weighs about 1 ton, yellow poplar about 1⅓ tons, sugar maple and white birch about 1½ tons, ash about 1¾ tons, white oak about 2 tons, and hickory more than 2 tons.

Dry wood is not only lighter than wet wood, but it also burns easier and produces more heat. Freshly cut wood can contain as much as 65 percent moisture, held in cells and cell walls. If it is burned, about 15 percent of the heat produced is wasted in evaporating the moisture.

When wood is air-dried, its moisture content drops to about 35 percent in three months and 30 percent in six months. In six months to a year, the wood is considered seasoned and contains about 20 to 25 percent moisture. The amount of water evaporated from a standard cord of wood over a year is surprisingly large, amounting to some 800 to 1400 pounds. So, if you buy wood by weight instead of volume, be sure to get the driest wood.

Because of its high moisture level, the heat value of freshly cut wood is

**THE STANDARD (or full) cord measures 4 by 4 by 8 feet. A face cord measures 4 by 8 feet, with each piece of wood 1 to 2 feet long.**





only about 4000 British thermal units (Btu) per pound. In contrast, a pound of seasoned wood has a heat value averaging 6400 Btu, about half as much as a pound of coal. Coniferous wood like pine burns a little hotter due to its resin content. Pine knots have about 40 percent more heat than ordinary wood.

Heat value and weight—keep these in mind when comparing different firewoods. Since a cord of a heavy wood weighs more than a cord of light wood, it has a higher heat value and so is worth more. For example, 1 cord of white oak has a heat value equal to 2 cords of white pine. One cord of hickory contains as much heat as 1½ cords of white oak, 1½ cords of black cherry, or 2⅓ cords of white pine. As a general comparison with other fuels, a standard cord of seasoned hardwood provides about as much heat as 1 ton of coal, 160 gallons of fuel oil, or 24,000 cubic feet of natural gas.

### Connoisseur

A firewood connoisseur will have a variety of woods on hand. Softwoods like pines and spruce are relatively easy to ignite and so are good for starting a fire. Used alone, softwoods make a quick warming fire, although they burn relatively fast and require frequent replenishment. Hardwoods such as ash, beech, birch, hickory, and oak are slower burning and need less attention. White oak is a favorite firewood; it burns uniformly with steady, glowing coals. Ash is another preferred firewood because it burns well, green or seasoned. Birch, some people say, should be used when still somewhat green, otherwise it tends to burn too quickly. The firewood connoisseur, aware of all the possibilities, burns a mixture of softwoods and hardwoods, adding fruitwoods and nutwoods to produce a little aroma.

Whether we select firewood carefully or simply use what is available, most of us will agree with Hal Borland, outdoor essayist, who wrote that an open fire is a thing of beauty, something that complements the “smokeless

## DO SOMETHING WILD

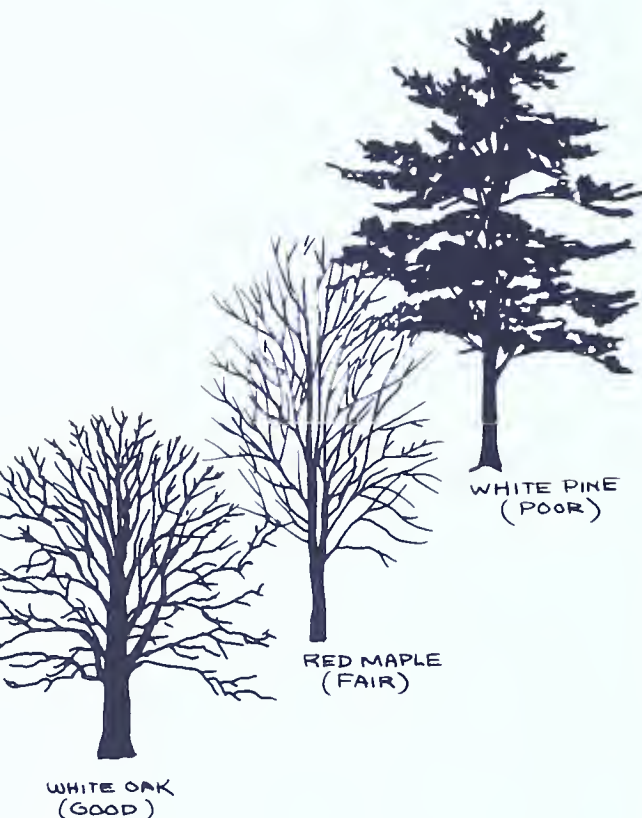


**THE WILD RESOURCE CONSERVATION ACT** of 1982 gives all Pennsylvanians an opportunity to actively support the protection and management of the state's wealth of natural resources. Modeled after the “income tax check off system” used successfully by 33 other states, Pennsylvania taxpayers may contribute all or a portion of their income tax refund to protect nongame wildlife and native plants. Much more can and needs to be done to protect our natural resources. So, when you're filling out your tax return, look for the owl and “Do Something Wise.” And if an income tax refund is not due, contributions may still be made directly to the Wild Resource Conservation Fund, P.O. Box 1467-G, Harrisburg, PA 17120.

fires” of colors spreading through the autumn woods. Later in the season, when cold winds blow through leafless trees, a wood fire still glows with enchantment, releasing the solar energy collected on sunny days many years ago.

### Approximate Heat Value per Cord of Seasoned Firewood

*High* (18 to 24 million Btu): Shagbark hickory, black locust, dogwood, ironwood, persimmon, apple, white oak, bitternut hickory, honey locust, pin oak, red oak, sugar maple, American beech, yellow



**HEAT VALUE**, ease of igniting and quality of wood coals are characteristics used when selecting firewood. A firewood connoisseur, however, will keep a variety of woods on hand.

tulip poplar, black willow, butternut, quaking aspen, white pine, American basswood.

### Ease of Igniting

*Good:* Dogwood, honey locust, yellow birch, white birch, red cedar, pitch pine, red pine, hemlock, black willow, butternut, quaking aspen, white pine, American basswood.

*Fair:* White oak, red maple, American elm, black ash, sycamore, silver maple.

*Poor:* Shagbark hickory, black locust, ironwood, persimmon, apple, bitternut hickory, pin oak, red oak, sugar maple, American beech, black walnut, white ash, green ash, hackberry, black cherry, black gum, sassafras.

### Quality of Wood Coals

*Good:* Shagbark hickory, black locust, dogwood, ironwood, persimmon, apple, white oak, bitternut hickory, honey locust, pin oak, red oak, sugar maple, American beech, yellow birch, white birch, green ash, white ash, hackberry, red maple, black cherry, American elm, black gum, black ash, sycamore, butternut.

*Fair:* Pitch pine, quaking aspen.

*Poor:* Red cedar, sassafras, red pine, hemlock, black willow, white pine, American basswood.

birch, black walnut, white ash, white birch, green ash.

*Medium* (15 to 18 million Btu): Hackberry, red maple, black cherry, American elm, black gum, black ash, sycamore, red cedar, silver maple, pitch pine, sassafras, red pine.

*Low* (12 to 15 million Btu): Hemlock,

## Swan Song

Legend has it that before a swan dies, it sings a beautiful farewell. In the case of North America's tundra swan, the legend may be true. Scientists have found that tundra swans utter a plaintive "departure song" — a prolonged musical note — just before they take to the air. That song is sometimes repeated when one of the birds dies.

## We're Glad, We're Glad!

We should be glad it's so cold in Antarctica. If all the ice there melted, the world's sea level would rise more than 200 feet, and more than half of the world's population would have to move to escape the flooding.

## Outside's Better

The air inside American homes may be up to ten times more polluted than the outdoors, according to a study by the Consumer Product Safety Commission. The major sources of indoor pollution are home insulation, aerosols, cleaners, plastics, paints, varnishes, heaters and furnishings.



# An Early Start

By Glenn W. Elison

I ARRIVED at my stand just at daylight, gently laid my rifle down and quietly eased out of my Kelty frame pack. Holding the pack upright I emptied its contents, starting with my 40-pound, 3-year-old son Travis. Along with the typical assortment of hunting equipment I had: a full size ensolite pad for a makeshift bed, extra sweater (size l), a thermos of hot chocolate, assorted junk food to satisfy a young palate, an army truck, two Hot-wheels cars, a Dick and Jane picture book, and Travis's toy rifle in case I needed backup. I settled down to wait for what I hoped would be quick action. Travis was well clothed. He had his complete Alaskan outfit, which we had just brought down from our home in Fairbanks. From his orange knit cap to his foam-lined Moon Boots, he was equipped for the cold. A bright orange vest, which had been tucked and pinned to stay on a body many sizes too small, provided the Pennsylvania touch. So began the father-son 1985 antlerless deer season.

Travis and I had selected our stand the day before, with the help of my brother Brad. I had hunted this Sullivan County hillside during my formative years. Now Travis and I had returned to Pennsylvania as part of our Christmas vacation. I was grateful for the chance to once again hunt with Dad and my brother. Eleven years had passed since my last deer hunt in Pennsylvania. The area had changed. Much of it had been selectively logged in the last few years. We picked a spot where visibility was good and tracks indicated deer had been traveling. I was particularly interested in seeing as well as pos-

sible. Spotting a deer before it spotted a restless 3-year-old was the basic element of my strategy.

As the light improved, we waited and I hoped. I had regularly hunted this hillside as a teenager. A large gang of hunters, many from the local Hills-grove area, used to drive the valley bottom early the first morning. Invariably deer were pushed out of the valley. I had taken my first deer, a doe, 19 years earlier, not 150 yards from where Travis and I now sat. Over the years many deer had been taken by me and other members of the Austin Club in this area; however, Dad and Brad had warned me that things had changed in the years since. Organized early morning drives were a thing of the past. Hunting pressure in the area had been light during the past several antlerless seasons.

About 7:45 a single shot echoed in the valley bottom. Several minutes later a few more rang out from Gooseberry Ridge across the valley. Travis was good. When he talked he made an exaggerated effort to whisper, which was in striking contrast to his everyday



BY MID-MORNING we had seen a gray squirrel and a few chickadees, but no deer. I decided to load Travis into the backpack and start easing along the sidehill.

voice. For ten minutes he held his toy rifle and helped me watch for deer. Then his attention shifted. He started to play with his toy trucks in the snow. After a few reminders he did a reasonably good job of dropping the sound effects. By mid-morning we had seen a gray squirrel and a few chickadees, but no deer.

I decided to load Travis into the backpack and start easing along the sidehill. I remembered my impatience with sitting as a young hunter and decided not to push my luck with Travis. I put him in the pack and stuffed his assorted paraphernalia around him. Holding the pack upright on the ground, I sat down, slid my arms through the shoulder straps, and reached for my hickory walking stick to aid in getting back on my feet. Rifle in one hand and hickory stick in the other, I started up the hill. I was thankful I had the stick. On the frozen, snow covered ground it provided a measure of safety. A fall would have been an unwelcome surprise at best and at worst could have injured Travis or me. From the Grand Canyon of the Colorado to Alaska's Brooks Range I have regularly used walking sticks when carrying heavy loads in rough terrain. They have prevented many falls.

### Moving Into Position

As I neared the top of the hill I heard Dad whistle. A brief visit revealed that his luck had been similar to ours. We had arranged before setting out in the morning that Dad would drive Roundtop, a white pine covered knob just north of the cabin. Brad was moving into position to watch the drive from the south. Travis and I would circle around to the north. As Dad and I talked, two shots rang out nearby. We thought they might be from Brad's 303 Savage.

Dad gave us 15 minutes to get into position. Shortly after separating, I met Steve Harvey, a local landowner. We visited briefly. The night before, Brad and I had dropped by Steve's place to catch up on activities on Camp

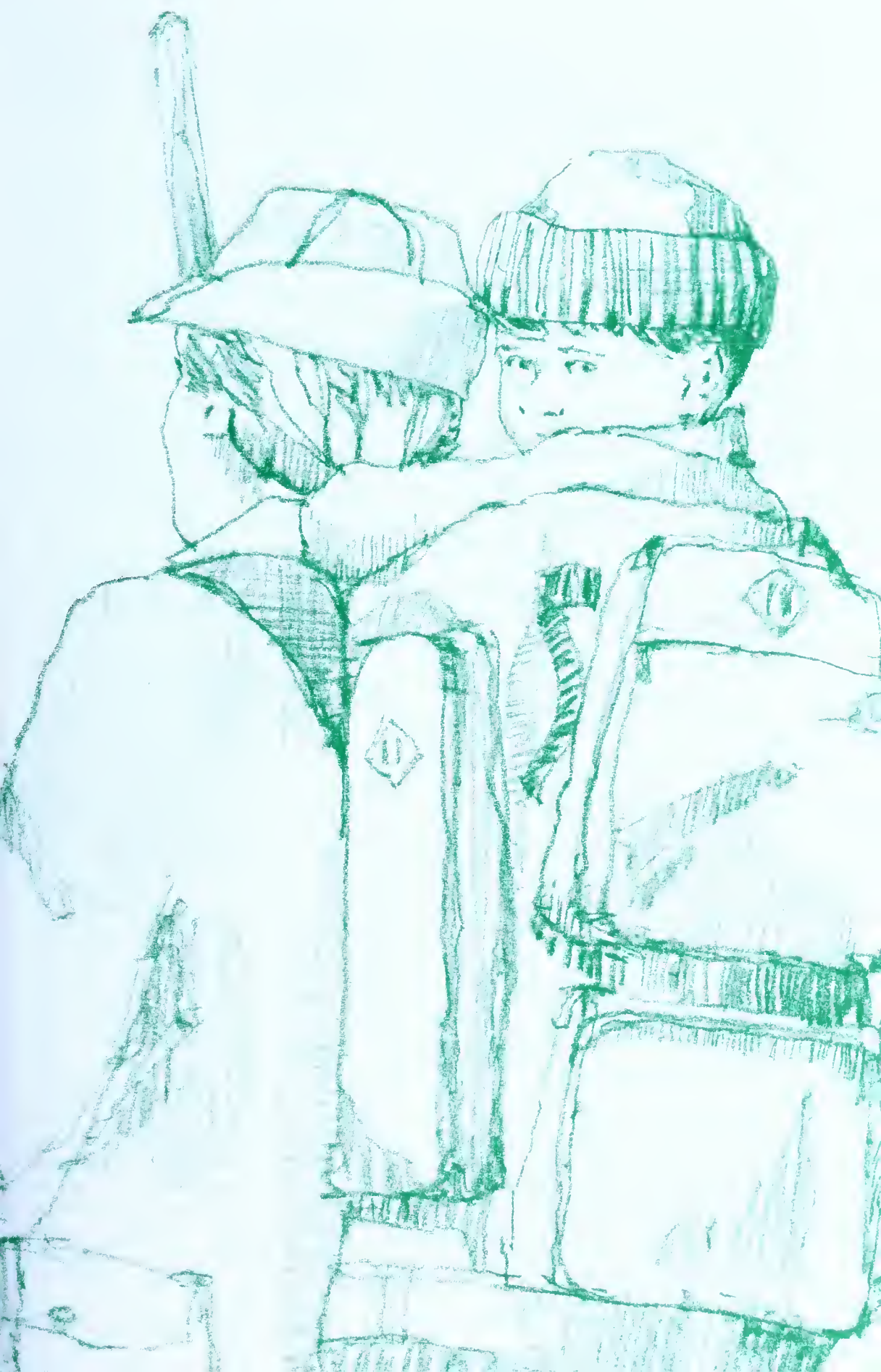
Mountain in particular and Sullivan County in general. As Travis and I moved on I walked slowly and stooped extra low to be sure Travis didn't get slapped by a branch or poked in an eye. The last thing I wanted for my little partner was unpleasant memories of his first days afield. About halfway to our watch I saw three guys dragging a deer. They were coming directly off of Roundtop. We visited with them for a minute. They were from the East End Hunting Club and had been the source of the shots Dad and I had heard earlier. I was surprised to see them as we had talked to some of their camp members during buck season and they indicated no one would be hunting in antlerless season. Travis and I moved on, not overly optimistic since hunters had just gone through at least part of the area Dad was going to drive.

I selected a stand on an abandoned road leading to our cabin and took Travis out of the pack. We waited. Almost 30 years earlier, when I was only slightly older than Travis, I had stood on this spot on an early spring evening and watched a sow bear and her two cubs moving off of Roundtop while Dad and Granddad worked to get their 1950 Mercury out of a mud hole. The visibility had been well over a quarter-mile then. The intervening years had been good to the white pines which now made it difficult to see 75 yards.

A few minutes later I heard Dad whistle. Then I heard deer moving in our direction. Through the pines I got a glimpse of one, two, and finally three deer. I had my rifle ready but all I ever got was the briefest of glimpses. The deer stopped behind a large pine whose thick boughs drooped to the ground. It was the last cover the deer would have unless they doubled back directly toward Dad. I didn't expect them to do that. I whispered to Travis to watch and pointed out the tree that hid the deer.

After what seemed like a very long time but wasn't, I heard the deer move. Then I saw them. A big doe led, followed by two large fawns. As they trot-





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## **GAME NEWS**

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ted through a stand of maple saplings, I aimed at the lead deer. When it entered an opening, I shot. The deer started running and I fired twice more. On the third shot the biggest deer stumbled. Then they were gone over a steep bank. As soon as the three deer disappeared, my brother started shooting.

I gave Travis a hug and asked him if he had seen the deer. He was excited. As he talked I dug my knife and drag rope out of the pack. Though I hadn't seen the doe fall, I was confident it hadn't gone far. The crosshairs had looked good on the first shot and the third one had definitely been a hit.

### **50 Yards Ahead**

I picked up Travis and walked the 50 yards to where the deer had been when I started shooting. We found their trail in the snow so I put Travis down. Together we followed the trail. In a few feet we found blood. Brad called and I answered. Soon he appeared. He told me my deer was about 50 yards ahead and that he had gotten one of the smaller ones. The doe had run over the bank and then fallen. When she fell, the others stopped and Brad was able to connect.

Dad joined us as I filled out my tag. To keep Travis warm while we field-dressed the deer, I put Brad's orange hunting coat on him. The sleeves dragged the ground and only his boots protruded from the bottom of the coat. He looked like an orange ET.

We were scarcely a hundred yards from the woods road and only a quarter-mile from the cabin. I offered Travis his choice of deer to drag and without hesitation he picked the smallest, proving he is no fool even at 3. We were soon back at the cabin, having

completed the easiest drag of my hunting career.

After a photo session we ate a leisurely lunch and discussed the best strategy for Dad to get a deer. The east end of Camp Mountain seemed the best bet. I had seen deer there every day during the last week of buck season. Dad decided to start out while Brad and I skinned our deer and got things organized around the cabin. We agreed to meet on a wide bench near the top of the mountain where I had been seeing deer. An hour later, we met Dad as planned. He had missed a lone doe a few minutes after getting on watch. At least he had seen deer.

We spent the afternoon driving, trying to push a deer to Dad. With 2½ drivers and one watcher, it was not that easy. There had been deer in the area, but getting the right individual in the right spot at the right time proved difficult. I met a surprising number of hunters as we put on our short drives. I talked a minute with several of them. Most were from nearby Hillsgrove.

"Quite a load there," one hunter said as I shifted Travis from one shoulder to the other.

"Startin' that one good and young," another added.

Travis's presence proved to be a good conversation starter. It reminded me of taking a new puppy for a walk around the neighborhood. It's a surefire way to strike up a conversation with people you meet.

Throughout the afternoon we drove hemlock thickets. Travis alternately walked or was carried on either my shoulders or Brad's. He was having a great time in the big outdoors and never complained. The fresh air, however, took its toll. Just before our last drive his eyelids banged shut and he fell into a deep sleep. I laid him down in the snow and he never moved. Fortunately, the weather was mild. He slept while I rested my shoulders and we waited for Dad to get into position for the last drive of the day. Four grouse and a turkey flushed on the drive, but no deer.



**WHILE WE** field-dressed the deer, I put Brad's orange hunting coat on Travis. The sleeves dragged the ground and only his boots protruded from the bottom of the coat. He looked like an orange ET.

Back at camp we made a toast to the day. The initiation of a new hunting generation and taking two deer added up to a good day's work. Supper was a hurried affair. It was a chore to get Travis to eat before he fell asleep again. The last forkful of spaghetti was swallowed and the plate removed moments before Travis's face hit the table and he nodded off.

Dad was out early Tuesday morning. The rest of us slept in. After getting the breakfast basics ready, I went upstairs and roused Travis from his 13-hour snooze. While he finished his pancakes, I packed and stowed gear for our return home.

We all met at the appointed time, at the same spot our eventful drive had started the day before. It was sunny and warm, a truly beautiful day. Dad set out to watch at the same spot where I had shot my deer. Brad, Travis and I chatted as we waited for him to reach his stand. Brad described his encounter with a medium size black bear just after daylight. He had been walking down an old trail to start a drive toward Dad when the bear ambled up the trail. Apparently roused by another hunter, the bear was more concerned about where he had come from than where he was headed. With the bear only 25 yards away and being unarmed, Brad decided the bear was close enough. He yelled, "Hey, bear!" The bear decided to pay attention to the business at hand and fled.

Travis and I started around the south side of Roundtop, while Brad took the north side. We slowly threaded our way through the thick pines. I spotted fresh deer tracks about halfway through the drive. I pointed them out to Travis as we followed them. After covering about a hundred yards, I heard deer running.

"Listen!" I told Travis.



The deer were headed in the right direction and we soon heard a shot.

"Was that Grandpop?" Travis asked.

"I think so. There aren't any other hunters in the area that I know of."

Brad, Dad, Travis, and I converged on the stand of striped maple where my deer had been when I shot. "Did you get it?" I asked.

"I didn't see it go down but I can't believe I missed at that range," Dad responded.

We followed the tracks and quickly found blood. It was obvious the deer couldn't go far. After a short distance everyone except Travis could see it lying dead against a sapling. We let Travis continue tracking. He almost stumbled over it before he saw it.

Three deer had trotted past Dad, following almost the same route as those of the day before. From my stand of the previous day, Dad shot and the button buck collapsed within 50 yards of where my deer fell. In the bright morning sunlight we took pictures and recounted events. The return trip to Pennsylvania had been a great success—great company, wonderful country, fine weather, three deer, lots of memories, and a new hunter started.

# CABIN FEVER

By Tom Hoag

*Her cabin'd, ample spirit,  
It flutter'd and fail'd for breath.  
Tonight it doth inherit  
The vasty hall of death.*

Matthew Arnold: Requiescat



*Jim Paaver*



**A**CENTRE COUNTY physician renowned for his work in the diagnosis and treatment of “partridgeal obsoletis” in Pennsylvania’s ruffed grouse population, now warns that a disease has sprung up which threatens the welfare of every grouse hunter and other outdoor person in the state.

The doctor cautions that unless we act quickly to subdue it, the infection will explode into an epidemic.

He alerts sportsmen to be on the lookout for the following symptoms: . . . *a general restlessness, accompanied by the uncontrollable urge to reclean barrels, refinish stocks, reload shells, refletch arrows, repaint decoys, reread faded issues of hunting and fishing magazines — anything but relax.*

If any of these symptoms appear, immediate action is essential.

Researchers in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Bradford, a community which has been devastated by the disease, are working round-the-clock to uncover a clue to its origins. While results are still inconclusive, pathologists believe that a pattern is emerging which could lead to an answer.

A Fayette County bowhunter reports that the memory of the October woods, alive and ablaze in reds and golds, causes him to shiver like a naked oak branch in a February wind.

A Susquehanna waterfowler complains that the cold, late-winter drizzle reminds him so much of his hours in the blind that his eyes burn from looking to the sky.

A grouse hunter who regularly traverses the Potter County mountainsides in search of birds now is confined to his bed at home in Coudersport, suffering from claustrophobia and an incessant tinkling in his ears. He swears that the sound originates in a tangled grapevine growing in the corner of his bedroom where his setter is nosing about.

Across the state, the toll rises daily of sportsmen stricken by the sickness referred to as “cabin fever.”

Although it won’t alleviate the heartache of those who long for the

touch of cold steel against their trigger fingers, the truth is that Keystone Staters have had plenty of company when it comes to suffering, for cabin fever has raged for centuries throughout our country and the world.

The term first crept into the English language as early as 1605 when, in *Macbeth*, Shakespeare’s tragic king laments,

But now I am cabin’d, cribb’d, confined,  
bound in to saucy doubts and fears.

Two centuries later, cabin fever flared up in the American West among cowboys who found themselves snow-bound in secluded line camps for considerable stretches of time. With nothing better to do than get in each other’s way and on each other’s nerves, agitated cowhands sometimes squeezed the trigger before considering the consequences, resulting in more than one premature trip to Boot Hill.

Even in the Wild West, though, a passionate land peopled by passionate men, cabin fever didn’t always result in disaster. On a snowy Colorado morning in the late 1800s, the Wetherill brothers, Richard and Al, stared at each other across the table of their winter cabin in the Mancos Valley. Bored to the point of desperation, they bundled up against the bitter cold and rode out to explore the frozen countryside. A short distance from their cabin, they entered a canyon where they discovered cliff dwellings chiseled into the face of the rock. Like portraits adorning a gallery wall, the cells and apartments of an ancient civilization hung above them. This initial find, prompted by a double-dose of cabin fever, led to further explorations by the Wetherills and ultimately to the uncovering of the ruins of Mesa Verde, a momentous archeological breakthrough.

While it’s pleasant to divert our attention to a Colorado canyon where a surprising discovery took place a century ago, it doesn’t help alleviate the suffering of those who are currently

snowbound, iced-in, and fed up with the overlong Pennsylvania winter.

We need an antidote *now* to relieve the symptoms of cabin fever and keep us painfree until the crocuses bloom.

Concerned individuals and sportsmen's organizations have fortunately now joined together in a concerted effort to stop the fever in its tracks.

Suggestions for remedies pour in daily to medical facilities across the state.

A breakthrough appears imminent.

Some outdoorsmen suggest that a scouting trip embarked upon while snow blankets the mountains is just the thing to drive away February's doldrums and replace them with September's dreams.

John Badger, a former supervisor of information and education for the Pennsylvania Game Commission, now retired, notes that at this time of year wild animals are generally quiet and easily approached. "Get out in the woods and really study them," he advises. "Bait them. Photograph them. Get close to them."

### Easy To Track

"Especially turkeys," adds Tom Baldrige, a member of the National Wild Turkey Federation. "With the snow, it's easy to track them, and the birds are easier to see."

One group of rugged individuals scoffs at the notion of cabin fever as the members tend to business in Pennsylvania's snow-covered woodlands and along her ice-laced streams.

"Trappers' fever—that's something else," admits Bob Hanes of the state's Trappers' Association. "It sets in around September or October, when you see tons of sign and you can't wait to put the steel in the ground in November."

Winter fishing enthusiasts, led by Wyndle Watson, *Pittsburgh Press* Outdoors Editor, bundle up, grab their rods, and head for the nearest lake when they start to feel the walls closing in on them. "Ice-fishing is probably the fastest growing sport in Pennsylvania,"

claims Watson.

"Purchase a fishing license, get out, and blow off steam," advises Ed Kruse, deputy conservation officer for the Pennsylvania Fish Commission.

If the prospect of braving the elements on a windswept lake for the chance to land a bluegill, bass, or northern pike is too strong a medicine for a fever-weakened person to tolerate, attendance at a meeting with fellow sufferers might be just the antidote needed to chase away late-winter blues.

"Getting together with hunters and outfitters from all over the world is a guaranteed way for a frustrated hunter to dream his way out of winter," claims Sunny Durish, whose organization, Safari Club International, meets monthly.

Penn's Water Bass Busters president Jim DeZort says that when his members congregate, "We watch films and videos on bass fishing, and really get psyched."

One man's remedy for cabin fever is as unique as his lifestyle. Chuck Furimsky operates the "Ole Man Winter Leather Shop" at Seven Springs Resort in Somerset County. When school lets out, he migrates with his family to Ocean City, New Jersey, where he runs a fishing guide service.

"When it's cold, I videotape scenes of the mountains and snow to watch when it gets really hot down at the shore. Then I shoot summer tapes to watch when I'm bored in the winter."

If venison roasts and blackpowder shoots don't drive the fever away, Ed Carter, the bearded and furred treasurer of the Independent Mountain Men of Pennsylvania, resorts to another strategy.

"I put on my buckskins and sit down in front of the TV. Works best when there's a nature show on," he admits.

For those souls whose systems have absorbed their limits of game shows, soap operas, and beer commercials, Cook Forest State Park Superintendent K. L. Schlentner suggests an alternative.



"Visit a state park cabin," he advises. "Ski the cross-country trails, and take in the 'Clarion River Country Sled Dog Challenge,'" an annual event guaranteed to eliminate the winter doldrums.

Two Pennsylvania writers whose lives are intimately linked to the outdoors have offered their insights into ways of avoiding cabin fever.

Chuck Fergus, who guides GAME NEWS readers on a close-up tour of the natural world each month in his "Thornapples" column, knows just how to get the most out of a Pennsylvania winter.

"If I start feeling like winter is a drag," he explains, "I make sure that I turn it into a plus. I try to get outside once a day, preferably for an hour or longer. Winter, like so many things, is worse in theory than in fact . . . There are always things to make getting outdoors a joy."

He lists cross-country skiing, watching for migrating birds, searching for deer crossings, or "just looking at the many subtle colors drawn by the low winter sun on mountains, fields, and woods" as ways to avoid getting stale.

For most of his 79 years, Carsten Ahrens has avoided "growing stale" by writing outdoor stories for GAME NEWS and other magazines around the country. With a confidence that his skills have earned him, and an enthusiasm which reflects his love for nature and for his craft, he assures the housebound that the best way to beat the effects of a prolonged cold spell is by "writing outdoor stories, of course."

It is reassuring to know that when disaster threatens, Pennsylvanians are so quick to come to the aid of those in distress. In the case of cabin fever, however, the resources of the Keystone State alone might be insufficient to arrest the disease.

Authorities have issued a call for help to the rest of the country, entreating the foremost figures in the outdoor field to lend a hand.

The response has been overwhelming.

One of the world's leading nature

photographers, Erwin A. Bauer, suffered from attacks of the fever until he discovered a surefire cure—cross-country skiing in the snowbound wilderness.

"My wife Peggy and I are fortunate to live where we can ski right from the back porch," he writes from his home in Teton Village, Wyoming. "We clamp on the skis, sling cameras around our necks, and we're off. We find moose and mule deer more approachable than in summer, and more often than not also run across other critters—ruffed grouse, coyotes, weasels, and now and then eagles, magpies, and ravens cleaning up the carcass of a winter-killed elk. When all else fails, there are snowscapes—bare cottonwoods beside a brittle stream may be my favorite subject."



**IN WINTER, according to John Badger, former I & E supervisor, wild animals are generally quiet and easily approached. "Get out in the woods and really study them," he advises.**

While the Bauers explore the frozen Wyoming wilderness which comes to their back door, George Harrison, nature editor of *Sports Afield*, and his wife Kit travel the world to stay one step ahead of the late-winter blues.

Each deer season Harrison returns to Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania, where he has "sat on the same square foot of turf for twenty consecutive opening days, with better than 70 percent success."

Later in the winter, though, when the snows bury their home state of Wisconsin, the Harrisons journey to more remote spots, perhaps to Kenya for a nature safari, or to the Cotswold Hills of western England.

"The trip to England is an annual event and part of our marriage vows," he confides. "We promised each other that we would be in England every spring for the rest of our lives."

As romantic as treks around the globe might be, for the Harrisons, it's all part of the job.

"Because we all consider it 'fun' and relaxing to get out, we mistakenly don't consider it 'work'. But it is absolutely vital to the success of our writing. An outdoor writer can get stale in a hurry if he or she does not get outdoors often enough."

Other writers relish the months when the weather drives them indoors. These periods afford them time to bask in the memories they have accumulated during the year, and to chronicle their adventures for their readers.

Jerome B. Robinson covers plenty of territory on assignment for *Sports Afield*. Concerning the cold-weather months, he says:



"It's a time I look forward to each year. I don't have to get up before dawn, don't have to put on wet boots—I just reflect on all the fun I've had and start writing about it. And just about the time I get caught up and start itching to go again, it's ice-out and the landlocks are hitting in Maine and then it's non-stop hunting and fishing until the end of January the next year. Cabin fever? When I get a chance to catch it, I wallow in it."

When the weather turns nasty, Jack Samson, *Field and Stream* editor-at-large, retreats to his typewriter.

"My cure for the late-winter blues," he tells us, "is to get into writing—books mostly. I have written thirteen books now and am embarking on number fourteen. When the wind howls and the snows pile up, instead of moaning about my lack of fishing and hunting, I start banging on the old manual typewriter. By the time I have gotten the bulk of the work done, it is suddenly the opening of trout season!"

*Sports Afield* calls Larry Benoit, author of *How to Bag the Biggest Buck of Your Life*, "possibly the best white-tail deer hunter in America." How does a person with this kind of reputation spend the long months after the season has ended?

"Every hunting season is a memory," he maintains. "I go for four weeks deep into the Maine woods for that Memory, so when the hunt is over, I sit back in my chair and relive everything I did again."

Benoit does keep busy during the winter—making knives, working on a new book, conducting clinics on the whitetail deer. It is the memory of the hunt, though, and the prospect of future hunts, which bars cabin fever from his Vermont door.

Jim Dougherty, hunting editor of *Bow and Arrow Hunting*, claims that in his home state of Oklahoma, cabin fever is short-lived.

**FISHING** enthusiasts fight cabin fever by grabbing their rods and heading for the nearest lake when they feel the walls closing in on them.



"We hunt ducks and geese 'til late January; spring turkey starts the first Saturday in April; and we get some excellent striped bass fishing in late February."

When the weather drives him indoors—"I can't get into fly fishing the striper run when it's 40 below"—Dougherty tolerates his captivity in several ways.

"I fool with my equipment, tie some flies, maybe carve on a decoy, and watch the pros tee it up in sunny Arizona on the boob-tube. I don't watch the fishing shows too much because they will tend to drive you crazy, all except Bill Dance, who makes the agony more acceptable."

Jim and Sylvia Bashline are an outdoor couple who don't mind being cooped up indoors during cold spells.

"It gives me time to catch up on letter writing, phone calls I should have attended to long ago, and stocking up on trout flies," says Jim.

"It's also a good time to have what the British call a 'good read'—enjoying the articles and books that have a way of stocking up.

"Sylvia usually goes on a cooking spree and concocts great things from the game and fish stockpiled in the freezer. After four or five days of such eating, I then have to go outside and cut some more wood just to burn off the extra pounds. Of course, that means more wood for the fire so we can hold out for another full week.

"Cabin fever? We never heard of it!"

Gordon Gullion, author of *Grouse of the North Shore* and one of the world's foremost authorities on the bird, is another individual who doesn't give a thought to cabin fever.

"I have so many things going, both indoors and out, that winter seldom lasts long enough for me to get done what I need to accomplish," he says. "I really need a couple more months before the busy spring season begins to get all the information we collected from last fall digested . . . and the time for getting ready for this spring's drumming season is only six weeks off."

## GAMEcooking Tips

### Rabbit Stew

- 1 small rabbit, cut into serving pieces
- 2 cups dried lima beans soaked overnight in 1½ quarts water
- 5 medium carrots, sliced
- 2 green peppers, chopped
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 clove garlic
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 teaspoons salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 2 tablespoons butter

Place rabbit in boiling water with the drained beans and 1¼ quarts of fresh water to cover. Add vegetables, garlic clove, bay leaves, and seasonings. Simmer one hour, adding more water if needed. Add butter for the last 15 minutes of cooking time. Serves 4.

—FROM WILD GAME COOKERY  
BY CAROL VANCE WARY

Drumming season only six weeks off? The thought alone warms the blood and lifts the spirits.

But another activity of the grouse holds the key, perhaps, to halting the spread of the disease which currently holds us in its grip. Just as certainly as the bird dives into a snowbank to weather a blizzard, it will explode from its hideaway when the storm clears to feel the sun's warmth upon its wings once again.

With this hope—with the certainty that our "wings" will again know the sun's touch and that our "drumming season" is but a breath of a March breeze away—we can lick cabin fever.

As the Rogers and Hammerstein song assures us,

"At the end of the storm is a golden sky and the sweet, silver song of a lark."

We call it spring.

# HEAD

Ass



"I DON'T want a rectangular, flat-roofed building," said Executive Director Pete Duncan to Janet Colesberry, architect with the firm of Curtis-Cox-Kennerly, Philadelphia. "Dare to be different. But get this building completed on time and within our budget." She did. Administrative offices and the warehouse extend across the front to the right. The Ross Leffler School of Conservation is on the left, extending to the rear.

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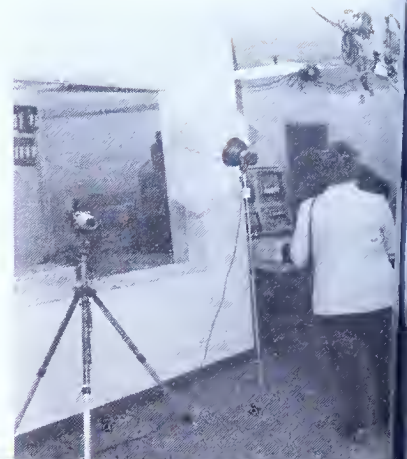
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**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR** Pete Duncan grabbed the attention of open house groups by pointing out the unusual sycamore table. He then went on to explain the agency's many and varied programs. Pete also mentioned how his office is essentially the same as all others, nothing fancy, but a pleasing place in which to work.



**OMINOUS DAYS** preceded the open house/dedication, but the skies cleared and the temperatures rose, giving ideal weather by the time visitors and guests arrived. The sign greeting arrivals to the building was cut from a diseased, 216-year-old sycamore tree, taken from SGL 290. Two 5-inch cross-sections cuts were also taken from the base of the sycamore; one was made into a table, the other will be placed in the lobby, with historical highlights of our country, state and the agency indicated on the tree's growth rings.

**MODERN** audio-visual and designed to make full use of production equipment, will serve television stations, newspapermen's groups and civic organizations. Libraries of video tapes, 16mm and black-and-white prints and wildlife are continually made available to the public.





# QUARTERS

Bob Mitchell

Editor: GAME NEWS

By Bob Haines

*Pennsylvania Game Commission headquarters complex. An open house and 15, and a dedication ceremony-three-day affair gave thousands of chance to learn, in an informal way, what the Game Commission does. Following are a few scenes from the headquarters open house/dedi-*



**SKYLIGHTS**, indirect fluorescent lighting and the open hallway show how building designers succeeded in bringing the outdoors inside. The administrative wing includes office space for 110 employees, representing the executive office and six administrative bureaus.

**FROM DEER** harvest report cards and prosecution reports to GAME NEWS subscription lists, accounting records and much more, nearly every facet of the agency's operations depends on computer support. Lyle "Skip" Koons, Jr., right, Bureau of Management Information Systems Director, showed how such needs were taken into account. Each work station and office in the building has outlets leading directly to this main computer. Also, the computer room was designed such that the walls can be moved easily if and when expansion is necessary.



**graphic studios,** self-the-art pro- to better serve schools, sports- ens. Extensive s, color slides ing, trapping updated and

**TED DOEBLER**, Commission President, greeted visitors to the Commissioners' conference room. He explained how a commission in a state agency is equivalent to a board of directors in private industry. Members determine policy, approve major expenditures, and select management personnel, for example. He also pointed out that Game Commissioners receive no salaries. Doeblar says he's a Commissioner because he's always enjoyed the outdoors, and he wants his grandchildren to have similar opportunities.







**THE CLASSROOM**, above, of the new Ross Leffler School of Conservation will undoubtedly be the center of training activities, but the facility also includes offices, dormitories, a library, typing room, lounge, cafeteria and gymnasium.



**VIEW FROM library** overlooking lobby. Nearly 3000 people attended the open house, and 350 came to the dedication ceremony.



**A 3500-FOOT** conservation trail winds behind the building. Designed and developed by agency land managers, the trail features a demonstration planting of the agency's food and cover mix, hundreds of trees and shrubs, and artificial nest boxes. Plans call for additional trees and shrubs, and plots featuring examples of what homeowners can do in their backyards to attract wildlife.

**MANY** former PGC employees attended the open house, adding a warm "family" reunion atmosphere to the event. Among those are Hayes Englert, Esther Gill, and Dot Durkin; back row, Bill Hodge, Tom Bell, and Dave Titus.



**LOOKING JUST** like a post office, the agency's mailroom, above, is just as busy, too. Thousands of incoming and outgoing pieces of mail are processed daily through this office. The warehouse, below, holds uniforms and supplies for the Harrisburg, region and district offices.







**PLATFORM** guests at the dedication included Lieutenant Governor Mark Singel; Senator James Rhoades and Representative Russel Lettermann, who were instrumental in getting the building project approved; Pete Duncan and our eight commissioners; WCO Richard Anderson, Lehigh County, who spoke for all Game Commission officers; and Roy Trexler, former Information and Education Chief, who gave the invocation.

**THE BUILDING** keys—which were on a SPORT key ring—were presented to the agency by Lieutenant Governor Mark Singel.

**DEDICATION** ceremony concluded with the raising of the American, Pennsylvania, and new Game Commission flags. The color guard was comprised of one district officer from each region, and was led by the Law Enforcement Bureau Assistant Director Jerry Wendt.



**COMMISSIONERS** Roy Wagner and Clair Clemens display the bronze commemorative plaque presented by Curtis-Cox-Kennerly. The plaque has since been prominently displayed in the building foyer.



**WCO Bill Bower** came attired in his 193 PGC uniform. Flanking Bill are office Steve Kleiner, wearing today's dress uniform, and Jim Kazakavage in the fire uniform.





# FIELD NOTES



## Busy

**SOMERSET COUNTY**—Now that the hunting seasons are over I'd like to thank our corps of hunter-trapper education instructors for all their efforts preparing for and administering our 10-hour courses. Instructors in my district conducted ten classes, totaling 350 students. — WCO Cliff Guindon, Jr., Boswell.



## Irrefutable

**LANCASTER COUNTY**—Patrolling an area known for illegal dumping, I observed a pickup coming toward me, away from the problem area. I stopped it and found fresh debris in the bed and the driver dirty and grimy. He denied dumping any trash, but couldn't explain what he was doing in the area. While he stayed in his vehicle I examined the area and found a large pile of fresh trash. In the trash I found three photographs of the truck driver. Presented with the evidence, the man confessed to dumping the trash and the next day he paid his \$300 fine. That was the first time I ever had a violator come with his own mug shots. — WCO John Shutter, Jr., Lancaster.

## Helping the New Kid

**YORK COUNTY**—After working in this district a little over a year now, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have helped me and made my job enjoyable. The deputies have always been there when I needed them, and my neighboring officers have been most willing to give me the benefit of their experience. The hunter-trapper education instructors, Food & Cover employees and fellow sportsmen have all cooperated in the fullest. Last, but most important, I'd like to thank my family for their sacrifices, patience and understanding, and for adapting to a lifestyle that's as demanding on them as it is on me. — WCO G. C. Houghton, Emigsville.

## SPORTS

**ELK COUNTY**—Being responsible for over 400 square miles, it's impossible for me and my four deputies to adequately enforce our laws without public support and cooperation. I'd like to thank everybody who provided us with information about violations over the past year. Believe me, without your help, most violators would have gone undetected. Again, thanks. — WCO Dick Bodenhorn, Ridgway.

## That's the Purpose

**WESTMORELAND COUNTY**—Not long ago I arrested an individual for driving an ATV on a game lands. When I informed the violator that the fine was \$100, he told me he thought it was \$25. It was obvious he'd been willing to risk \$25, but that he considered \$100 a little steep. — WCO R. D. Hixon, Ligonier.



## Asking For Trouble

**PIKE COUNTY**—Last fall an unfortunate incident occurred here. It illustrates all too well what can happen when wild animals lose their natural fear of humans. At a local vacation home complex there's an overabundance of deer. The animals have become so accustomed to being fed that they come running whenever somebody steps outside. One morning a lady was outside enjoying coffee and a danish while her 18-month-old baby played nearby. A doe suddenly appeared, took the lady's danish, and then noticed the baby had one, too. The doe kicked the baby. As the lady jumped to protect her child, her husband came running to see what all the commotion was about. He couldn't believe his eyes. His wife was on the ground, being pummeled by the deer. When he yelled the deer came running at him on its hind legs, its front legs slashing the air. He got struck twice and ended up in a wrestling match. The incident ended as suddenly as it began when the deer simply walked away. All things considered, the family was fortunate. The baby got a fat lip; the lady, a broken cheek bone, a dandy black eye, and many welts and bruises on her back; and the man, a few scrapes and bruises. I actually shuddered later in the day when I saw a family feeding apples to a large-antlered buck. —WCO Robert D. Buss, Hawley.

## Still Doesn't Have It

**LEHIGH COUNTY**—Changing the agency's name from Game Commission to Wildlife Commission would eliminate at least one person's confusion. The person called me because he had been thrown out of a tavern after getting caught using slugs in a slot machine. He wanted me to raid the place. After I explained to him who we actually are he replied, "Oh, okay. I'll call you if I have any problems with fish." —WCO T. M. Grenoble, Fogelsville.



## Plausible

**BRADFORD COUNTY**—In the September Field Notes, my neighboring officer Dan Marks related how he managed to call in 20 squirrels while spring gobbler hunting. He said he had no idea why. I pondered his remarks and could come up with only one possible explanation. A man standing in the woods trying to sound like a turkey must appear a little nuts, and everybody—including Dan—knows how much squirrels like nuts. —WCO William A. Bower, Troy.

## Good Community Service

**SCHUYLKILL COUNTY**—Last fall, for the second year, the Pottsville Hospital conducted a Healthy Hunter Screening program. Each participant was given an electrocardiogram and had his serum cholesterol, blood pressure and vision tested. Around 80 people, including some of my deputies, took advantage of this life saving community service. —WCO John C. Shutkufski, Pottsville.

## Hitchin' a Ride

**CRAWFORD COUNTY**—While marking a boundary line, surveyor Lynn Hofius was watching a nearby whitetail and saw a red-winged blackbird fly over and land on the deer's back. The deer didn't seem bothered in the least. —WCO Dave Myers, Linesville.



### Expensive Training Methods

**YORK COUNTY**—Mike Boone, our area hunter-trapper education coordinator, bought a fancy decoy to use for training his retriever. He also decided to shoot his shotgun when he launched the decoy so the dog would get accustomed to the noise. Good ideas. But on his first throw, Mike blew the decoy into so many pieces the dog didn't know which to go after. — WCO G. J. Martin, Spring Grove.

### Felt The Sting

**LAWRENCE COUNTY**—Three poor dove hunters felt the effects of our new Game and Wildlife Code. What would have been \$55 in penalties under the old law were \$400 under the new one. I'm sure those three, anyway, will be more conscientious about obeying regulations from now on. — WCO Gene W. Beaumont, New Castle.

### Waiting For His Dish

**CRAWFORD COUNTY**—Deputy Gene Soltesz was driving down a road when he noticed an unusual lump on top of a large round hay bale. A look through binoculars revealed a red fox sunning itself. Gene didn't say if it was lying on its back like a familiar black and white canine is known to do, but I was left wondering if foxes read "Peanuts." — WCO Robert W. Criswell, Saegertown.

## The Job's What Counts

**WESTMORELAND COUNTY**—Among the changes brought by the new Game and Wildlife Code was a change in our title from district game protector (DGP) to wildlife conservation officer (WCO). No matter what our official title, though, most people think of us as "wardens." — WCO Dennis L. Neideigh, Greensburg.

### Try a Remote Release

When several crows began frequenting a dead snag in my woodlot, I set up a feeding station for them within view of my living room window. Every morning I sat in my rocking chair and watched them devour table scraps and other goodies I put out for them. Feeling they had become accustomed to my presence, I set a camera up on a tripod in hopes of getting some good photos for a slide presentation I'm working on. The crows still aren't disturbed by my presence, but every time I get near the tripod they immediately fly away. — IES B. K. Moore, Saltsburg.



### Why Not?

A certain officer revealed to me that he wears pantyhose while fishing because they make it easy to get chest waders on and off. If anybody would like more information on the subject, Chuck usually takes his coffee break in Montrose. — LMO Chester J. Harris, Athens.



## Get Out of the Way

**ARMSTRONG COUNTY**—While Escoe Hallman, Dayton, was mowing weeds with his brush hog, he was surprised when a bear charged his tractor. The bear collided with the left rear wheel, rolled back, and then climbed up on the mower. The vibration and noise apparently was too much for it, because it quickly jumped off. At that point Escoe saw two cubs in the weeds on the other side of the tractor. Then the incident made sense. The bear wasn't attacking, it was just taking the shortest route to its young. — WCO Al Scott, Rural Valley.

## Both Lost

**DAUPHIN COUNTY**—After hearing a mysterious thump against the side of his house, the homeowner went out and found something unusual. He called Deputy Larry Mummert who found a dead broad-winged hawk. It's not uncommon for birds to fly into windows, but in this instance the hawk had a dead red squirrel in its talons. — WCO Skip Littwin, Hummelstown.

## Not At the Moment

**BLAIR COUNTY**—An individual was recently apprehended for spotlighting deer while possessing a firearm and other paraphernalia poachers use. The outlaw was stopped by one agency vehicle, but when two others quickly arrived as backups and surrounded the culprit he exclaimed, "Gee, I never saw so many game wardens. Are you having a poaching problem?" — WCO Steve Kleiner, Altoona.

## I & E Is the Key

**POTTER COUNTY**—I was amazed at how many people in the audience changed their opinions after I presented a slide program on bats at Ole Bull State Park. It just goes to show, ignorance is the basis for nearly all our fears. — WCO Ron Clouser, Galeton.

## Makes Sense

**JUNIATA COUNTY**—Last year many farmers here experienced more crop damage by squirrels than deer. I figure the shortage of acorns caused by the extremely dry summer forced the bushytails to farmlands for something to eat. — WCO Daniel L. Clark, Honey Grove.



## Preparation's the Answer

**ADAMS COUNTY**—I could tell fall had arrived without even looking at the calendar. On the first day I received two calls from people wanting squirrels removed from their houses. I guess the squirrels knew what they were doing. They were preparing winter quarters, stocking up on supplies, and getting ready to settle in for a long cold spell. — WCO L.D. Haynes, Biglerville.

## Nothing Escapes

**LYCOMING COUNTY**—I recently attended a symposium on acid rain. After hearing of its many negative effects on our air, water, soil, forests, fish and other aquatic life, I was amazed to be asked if I thought it was affecting our wildlife, too. Acid precipitation is one of our most pressing problems. It's affecting our whole environment. Solutions exist, but they aren't easy or popular. I suggest that if you're not familiar with this problem, you become so. Believe me, it's affecting all of us. — WCO Dan Marks, Proctor.

## Locked Out

**SNYDER COUNTY**—I left a sportsmen's club meeting one evening only to find I had locked both sets of keys in my car. Fortunately, though, a phone call brought a quick rescue from the Selinsgrove State Police. Thanks again, officers, for saving me a little embarrassment, and for all the other help you have given me and my deputies over the years. —WCO John Roller, Beavertown.

## And Hunter Ed

**LUZERNE COUNTY**—Over a million people hunted deer in Pennsylvania in 1986. The harvest was near an all time high, and yet the number of accidents, 125, was the fourth lowest since 1915, when record keeping began. The basic reason for this outstanding safety record is irrefutable: fluorescent orange saves lives. —WCO Robert W. Nolf, Conyngham.



## Buy More Sets

**COLUMBIA COUNTY**—While manning our exhibit at the Bloomsburg Fair, a lady told me how much she appreciates the Game Commission's bird and mammal charts. Whenever she sees an animal she can't identify, she rushes to her charts. The only problem, however, is that her husband, after using the charts to wallpaper the outhouse at their camp, is getting tired of all her interruptions. —WCO George Wilcox, Millville.

## Hardly Minor

**INDIANA COUNTY**—Being a conservation officer as well as a hunter, I'm continually reminded of the image problems hunters often bring on themselves. For instance, through tips from two motorists I apprehended an individual for hunting from a vehicle. He had let his 16-year-old son use the car hood as a rest to shoot at a woodchuck. The lad took two shots across a safety zone. Although both were in violation, I cited only the father and only for hunting from a vehicle. Each received written warnings for nine other violations. While paying his \$300 the father said he couldn't believe the fine was so high for such a minor violation. —WCO Mel Schake, Indiana.

## Quick Dividends

**FRANKLIN COUNTY**—On the very weekend after completing a hunter-trapper education course, one of the 15-year-old graduates and his buddy decided to do some preseason scouting. Just as they were leaving he remembered something he had seen in the survival film shown in class and went back and got some matches. They went off to the South Mountain area and, you guessed it, got lost. They stayed warm and comfortable overnight, though, and rangers and foresters from Caledonia Park found them in fine shape the next morning. —WCO Frank Clark, Fayetteville.

## Price Is Right, Too

**McKEAN COUNTY**—Great horned owls are notorious predators on skunks so I wasn't surprised, while investigating the illegal killing of a great horned owl, that there was a strong smell of skunk in the area and on the owl itself. The defendant even admitted having a skunk problem. But thanks to his thoughtlessness, he and his neighbors lost one of nature's most effective skunk controllers. —WCO John P. Dzemyan, Smethport.



# Vogue Takes Seat on Commission



**Elmer M. Rinehart**



**Edward L. Vogue, Jr.**

Edward L. Vogue, Jr., Dupont, Luzerne County, has been appointed by Governor Robert P. Casey to the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

Vogue, a Pocono Mountain School District elementary school principal and deputy wildlife conservation officer, replaces Elmer M. Rinehart as

representative of eight northeastern counties.

In addition to holding undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Scranton, Vogue has done post graduate work at Glassboro and Trenton Colleges, and holds a number of teaching and administrative certificates.

Married to the former Joan Skrzykowski, Commissioner and Mrs. Vogue have two sons: Edward, 25, a teacher in the Pocono Mountain School District; and Gary, 23, the Dupont Borough Chief of Police.

An avid hunter and fisherman, Vogue also is an active hunter education instructor and he conducts annual wildlife seminars for the Boy Scouts.

Elmer M. Rinehart, the former ranking member of the Commission, was appointed in 1972. He served two full terms and was Commission President from 1975 through 1977.



# Bonus Deer Strategies Advanced

**T**O MORE effectively control deer populations in many areas, the Game Commission in January unveiled a proposal to extend the bonus two-deer program throughout the state. The outgrowth of a successful 1987 experiment in four southeastern counties, the proposal would permit hunters to buy unsold antlerless licenses and take a second deer in the county where the license was purchased.

Hunters opting for a regular antlerless deer license would apply to county treasurers beginning October 3. If a county's allocation is not exhausted by October 24, remaining licenses could be purchased as "regular" and/or "bonus" antlerless deer licenses. Bonus licenses, available to both residents and nonresidents, would be valid only during the regularly scheduled antlerless deer seasons.

A "combination" muzzleloader-bonus antlerless deer license would also be available to hunters who failed to purchase a regular muzzleloader stamp by the September 30 deadline. A muzzleloader stamp attached to a bonus license would permit the hunter to take an antlerless deer only in a designated county, and only during the muzzleloader season.

A person who opted for a regular muzzleloader license (purchased by September 30) would not be eligible to buy a combination muzzleloader license, but would be permitted to purchase a bonus antlerless license and harvest an antlerless deer in the antlerless season.

With the prerequisite that all hunters possess a regular hunting license (and archers an archery license), the proposed regulations offer a number of combinations in which deer could be legally harvested. Some examples:

A hunter has a regular antlerless license: one deer—either a buck in the regular buck season or an antlerless deer (no change from the past).

A hunter has a bonus antlerless license: two deer—a buck in the regular buck season and an antlerless deer.

A hunter has a regular antlerless license and a bonus antlerless license: two deer—a buck in the regular buck season and an antlerless deer, or two antlerless deer.

A hunter has a regular muzzleloader license and a bonus antlerless license: two deer—a buck in the regular buck season and an antlerless deer (in a designated county) in the regular antlerless season, or an antlerless deer (designated county) in the regular antlerless season, plus either an antlered or antlerless deer (anywhere in the state) in the muzzleloader season.

A hunter has a regular antlerless license and a "combination" muzzleloader-bonus antlerless license: two deer—an antlered deer in the regular buck season and an antlerless deer (designated county) during the muzzleloader season, or an antlerless deer (designated county) during the regular antlerless season plus an antlerless deer (designated county) during the muzzleloader season.

Archers could still harvest a deer of either sex during the early archery season, and then apply for a bonus license to harvest an antlerless deer in the regular antlerless season.

Commenting on the proposal, Executive Director Peter S. Duncan noted that the proposal has four specific advantages: "It would open the bonus antlerless deer system to the greatest number of hunters; it would help us come closer to our deer management targets in all counties; it would direct more hunters to problem areas where more deer need to be harvested; and it would be fair to each group of hunters—the archers, modern rifle-shotgun-handgun shooters, and the black powder enthusiasts."



# Invitation of a Name

**T**HERE'S SOMETHING about people that makes us want to name the things we see. I suppose it saves us from having to say, "Hey, you, look at that watchamacallit over by the whoozywhats."

Hills, mountains, swamps, valleys—none ever asked to be named. In themselves, they don't need it. They're just there, in their own ponderous or subtle self-evident way. But we humans feel a need to identify them, I suspect not merely to communicate locations to each other, but to in some way capture them for ourselves. Perhaps we need to name to subdue the awe the raw Earth inspires, to allow us to live with it.

In any case, the naming works both ways. With a man-given title, a hemlock-hung hollow or a laurel-studded ridge gains a new, inviting personality. Just as a person's unusual, funny or beautiful name makes us curious to know him or her better, so the name of a hollow or hill alone can spark us into picking up our hunting gear and going out to make its acquaintance.

Like Savage Mountain, a long, tall ridge down near the state line in southwestern Pennsylvania. Savage! What a name for a mountain! What a thing to be able to tell other hunters, when they ask, "Where'd you get your deer this year?" "I got him up on top of Savage Mountain (where'd you hunt, wimp?)." Even if all I ever took off Savage Mountain was a few squirrels, I liked the sound of the name. It was always in the back of my mind when I was there, making the ridge seem extra wild and fierce. Whenever the mist rolled in on top and I had to pick my way through the rocks down to the trail, with the dark, naked trees so ghostly against the gray, I knew the name fit.

Most of my hunting on Savage Mountain was at Bear Wallows. For years I knew these as The Waterholes, natural seeps where deer came to lick.

There hadn't been any bears on the mountain for years, but once I learned the waterholes' "right" name, hunting at Bear Wallows took on a new appeal. In the hours on stand, I often conjured up the bruins that had lumbered through and lazed in the mud in years gone by. I know it's just imagination, but the woods always have a primeval, untamed feel when I'm hunting places with wild animal names. I'm always drawn to a Panther Run, Wolf Creek, Wildcat or Rattlesnake Hollow, even if I don't expect to see their namesakes.

## Good Excuse

A curious or unusual name is just as good an excuse for investigating a new hunting spot. I knew I wouldn't be satisfied, once I'd learned their names, until I'd been to Bull, Cow and Calf Hollows. All three empty, in a row, into a larger drainage in northwestern Pennsylvania. I justified my visits by locating a great deer-hiding thicket between Bull and Cow and lots of squirrel sign between Cow and Calf. And, yes, Calf was the smallest hollow.

Maybe I have just enough sense of humor that I enjoy telling people I hunt Merry Christmas Hollow or on the Baby Mountain Road, around Hermit Spring or near Fool's Creek. I like the second looks such a statement always gets. Then again, there are the backwoods, hillbilly names that are just too irresistible to ignore. I find myself hiking out the Bark Cabin Trail,

## Another View...

by Linda Steiner



**A TRANQUIL** wintry scene, right? This is near Panther Caves, Venango County. Now how does it look?

along Jake Shanty Ridge or up Whiskey Run, on a lark.

The Pennsylvania wilderness must have seemed frightening, even evil, to those settlers who were the name-givers of long ago. Throughout the state, I've hunted more than one Devil's or Hell's Kitchen (invariably extremely steep), along the Devil's Backbone (always a rock outcropping), or in Hell or Devil's Hollow. At times the names seemed justified. In a Devil's Hollow in northern Pennsylvania, a wildcat followed my father-in-law's footsteps on a bleak, wintry evening in buck season. Of course, the cat uttered unearthly screams the whole way. Dark Hollow, Spook Hollow, the Black Forest, Plum Dungeon, Lamentation Run, though they're just places of trees and rocks like all the rest, when you're there, the names make you take a glance behind you.

It would be fun to learn the stories behind all the names. Some can be found through research, of course, in local lore and libraries, but others are lost to all but the imagination. Maybe a valley was named for someone who once lived there, or a ridge for some-

thing that happened or was seen there. It may seem that all the title-giving was in the long-gone past, but I was there when Turkey Hollow and Squirrel Hollow were named.

Turkey Hollow and Squirrel Hollow lead off separate mountains into the same little creek bottom in the state's southern highlands. If the hollows had other names, those of us who hunted them never knew or cared to know. We were "weekend locals," fixtures only in hunting season. Turkey Hollow and Squirrel Hollow opened almost directly into each other on opposite sides of the stream, and we would park our vehicles along the dirt road below. Some of the group always wanted to hunt one way, some the other, so we needed to distinguish between the hollows. Someone, I don't remember who, first used the names, probably while waving a vague arm, and they stuck.

Turkey Hollow came by the moniker honestly. It was the result of a morning in archery season when several of us stumbled into a flock of "at least" one hundred wild turkeys coming off roost. It was foggy, and in the confusion and ruckus, the clucking and yelping, for a while it seemed like Grand Central at rush hour, with feathers. Squirrel Hollow was so-dubbed because it was never-fail for bushytails. It had just the right mixture of oaks and hickories, pine and greenbrier that a hunter could always count on grays there when the rest of the mountain was bare.

I hadn't thought in years about our group's informal names for the hollows, until I made a new acquaintance who knew someone who knew someone who was one of the old gang. I asked him how his season had gone and he said he'd taken a nice buck "on the hill above Turkey Hollow" our Turkey Hollow. I could hear the capital letters. I asked where he'd gotten the name and he seemed surprised. "Why, that's



what everybody calls it." Then he added, "I missed a bigger one the day before, up in Squirrel Hollow."

I don't expect Turkey Hollow and Squirrel Hollow to appear as official designations on maps of the area, but then again, why not? If they become common usage — and the names are as

good as the Porcupine Runs, Buffalo Mountains and Coon Creeks I've known — they could. Maybe someday some hunter will climb our hollows just to see what they have to offer, if there really are turkeys and squirrels there, just because he couldn't resist the invitation of a name.

## Unit Management Study Concluded

**A** NINE-MONTH unit management study, initiated by the agency in April 1987, has been concluded. The six experimental unit headquarters have closed, and the personnel assigned to them have assumed their original positions as district wildlife conservation officers.

After reviewing a lengthy evaluation by the committee assigned to review the project, the Commission adopted recommendations that will improve communications between the agency and the public, and result in the more effective deployment of wildlife conservation officers in the state's many and diverse rural, urban and metropolitan counties.

Commenting on the study recommendations, Executive Director Peter Duncan said, "The experiment served us quite well and we learned a great deal about our field operations. Probably the most important single finding confirmed by the study committee centered on communications. Sportsmen, municipal agencies, and others in the public and private sector were, in many areas, increasingly frustrated by their inability to contact wildlife conservation officers.

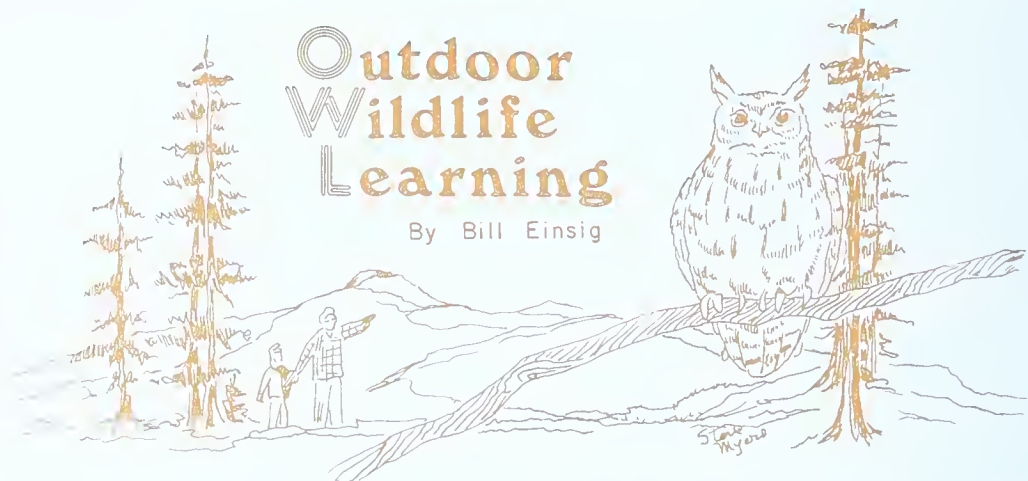
"Early on, even before the unit management study was initiated," explained Duncan, "we were increasingly concerned that communications and direct interactions between our field officers and sportsmen were growing more difficult. While the study confirmed and further magnified our concerns, we're confident we can and will effectively address those problems in the months ahead."

Duncan went on to say, "We're very much aware that nothing is more irritating than trying to contact someone, especially a public service agency representative, only to get an answering machine which can't think and respond. But, we also know the technology exists that can better and more effectively provide public access to the Game Commission.

"The wheels are already in motion to develop an operational telecommunications system where, by using a toll-free number, the public can call our regional offices and directly talk to a qualified Commission representative who can answer questions and, if necessary, dispatch field officers to handle bona-fide emergencies.

"Another important benefit of enhanced communications is that district officers and their deputies would have radio contact with regional offices day and night most of the year, and around the clock during the spring and fall hunting seasons. We see that as essential for their own personal safety.

"Proposed improvements, however, are not without cost," Duncan concluded. "To make the system work effectively and efficiently, we'll need more dispatchers and equipment. Additional personnel and recurring monthly costs associated with toll-free telephone lines are expensive — projected to cost about \$450,000 annually. But, the study reveals that's what the public wants and expects, and the Commission and staff concur that money invested in additional communications equipment and personnel is money well spent."



## Witches, Toads and Backyard Plants

Imagine, lurking in the lawn just outside your window are ingredients that can cure malaria, predict your lifelong lover, and even launch the brooms of witches! Amazed? You should be, because these ingredients come from plants now considered just common weeds. In fact, they are among the most common and cursed defilers of the perfect lawn.

But they were not always so criminal. Plant folklore abounds in recipes and concoctions that use our weeds for many varied purposes. Such ancient stories dramatizing plants as more than just weeds, may be just the hook needed to catch the interest of a young naturalist. There's exciting history here.

### The Tooth of the Lion

Nobody knows for sure which part of the dandelion was like the lion's tooth. Some say the dandelion's medicinal powers were as great as those of a lion's tooth. Others say its root is as white, while still others believe the shape of the petals or the jagged leaves resemble the lion's formidable canines.

At one time dandelion was actually grown as a green vegetable. It's still eaten in spring, when the young leaves are cooked and drenched with bacon dressing. Its scientific name tells us it was once as common a food as lettuce and spinach are today: *Taraxacum* = "bitter herb;" *officinale* = "sold in the market."

Folklore is rich with superstitions surrounding the dandelion. Most involve the puffball of ripe seeds:

—If you blow all the seeds from a puffball in one breath your wish will come true.

—The number of seeds left after one puff equals the time of day.

—The number of puffs needed to clear the puffball equals the time of day.

—The number of seeds left after one strong puff predicts the number of children you'll have. (I've tried this. I'm going to have 13!)

There's a love connection here, too. The amount of puff remaining after one blow tells you how much your lover is thinking of you. Also, if you quietly whisper words of love to your distant sweetheart and then blow the puffball, the seeds will carry your message to your lover's ear.

A few other characteristics are worth investigating. The flowers are said to open between 6 a.m. and 7 a.m., and then only if the plant gets enough sunlight. They close to avoid the extreme heat of midday summer. Perhaps the most interesting of all is the casual observation that dandelion leaves seem to be more sharply toothed in sunlit areas but broader and more bluntly toothed in shady spots. That makes sense, but is it true in your lawn?

### Hawkweed

You'll be glad to know that pesky mat of hairy leaves, creeping like a vine as it eats chunks of your lawn, was brought to this country as a cure for eye diseases. Old-time medicine men thought the yellow or orange flowers resembled the human eye. Hence, they thought, the plant must be useful for treating eye ailments. It was also called orange lungwort in England, where it was used to treat respiratory problems. Does the leaf remind you of a lung?



## Clover

More superstitions and folklore developed around clover than any other plant. Its three leaves represented the Trinity to early Christians and was a symbol of good luck, fertility and virtue.

Both 2- and 4-leaf clovers were considered sacred and good luck, but a 5-leaf clover was a sign of bad luck and that the finder would soon become ill. Even the common 3-leaf variety provided protection from evil spells and the works of nasty witches. If you carried a 4-leaf clover on Christmas Eve, you could actually see witches!

Most clover lore surrounds young girls and their future lovers:

- If a girl finds a 4-leaf clover and puts it into her shoe, she'll marry the first man she sees.

- If she eats the clover, she'll marry the next man who shakes her hand and,

- If she hangs the clover over her door, the next man to walk under it will marry her.

- If she just puts her rare find under her pillow, she'll dream beautiful dreams of her lover.

## Butter-n-Eggs

If you look closely at the yellow and orange blossom of this weed you'll understand the origin of its common name. Look a bit closer as you gently squeeze the sides of the blossom and you'll see its mouth open, revealing a deep throat. That resemblance was enough to convince physicians of centuries past that here was a remedy for mouth and throat afflictions. It was also a cure for jaundice and conjunctivitis. Again, the flower's yellow color was the old doctor's clue.

## "Watcher of the Road"

There once was a beautiful young girl whose lover left her with a promise that he would soon return. He did not, but she waited each day along the road, watching for him. Finally, she died of a broken heart and became the chicory plant.

In addition to being used as a coffee substitute, or a coffee additive, chicory, similar to endive, was once grown as a green vegetable. Ancient Egyptians used chicory as a remedy for liver ailments.

Chicory blossoms are a bit unusual. They open in early morning and turn east

to track the morning sun. By noon the blossoms fade and wilt.

## "Five Fingers"

The generic name for cinquefoil is *Potentilla*, and it was highly respected as a potent drug. Hippocrates used it as a cure for fevers (such as malaria) while Dioscorides recommended a mixture of three cinquefoil leaves and three spiders for other general ailments.

It was the witches, however, who made the greatest use of cinquefoil. They rubbed it on their skin to induce a trance-like state and combined it with other good things such as nightshade, hemlock, thornapple, and spider legs to make an evil brew. They also worked the juice into a paste that allowed witches to fly at will.

## "Devil's Head"

The narrow-leaved plantain was brought to this country in the grain seed of early settlers. American Indians noticed the new arrival and tagged it as a reminder of the settlers' advances into new territories. They called it "white man's foot."

In ancient times the plantain was used to treat broken skin wounds, and in the late 17th century syrup of buckhorn was still included in the medicinal inventory of the prestigious *London Pharmacopoeia*. It was even thought that toads ate the seed heads to cure themselves of whatever ailments toads are burdened with.

## Collecting Your Props

If you plan to lead a group of youngsters on an adventure in plant folklore, consider this idea to get everyone involved.

Divide the group into teams of three and give each team a clothes hanger bent into a rough square. Next, spread the teams throughout the study area and ask them to carefully toss their hangers onto the ground. Then have them collect one specimen of each plant type within their hangers. Do that two or three times:

Specimens should be placed in small bags and, after you've reassembled the teams, you can begin to explore each bag, giving exciting stories behind the plants. You may not be able to identify all the plants and you may not know more than the name of others. Skip them. Concentrate on the ones you know.



**By Bill Bower**

**Wildlife Conservation Officer  
Bradford County**

SOMETIMES sportsmen see or hear about violations of the Game Law. Sometimes they pass this information along and sometimes they don't. Other times they will see a game protector and say, "Boy, you should have been here last month." They then proceed to tell you about the violation. And then there are times someone will see a violation and try to make an investigation and possibly an arrest on his own. Usually these attempts help the violators get away, or valuable evidence is destroyed by well-meaning sportsmen. Planning to come back later, violators sometimes leave illegal game such as deer where they shot it. A sportsman, in the meantime, finds the deer, rolls it over to check for bullets, or drags it some distance. The scene is changed. Next he contacts the game protector who stakes out the deer. When the violator comes back he sees immediately that things are not the same. He becomes suspicious and leaves without ever going close to the deer—no arrest is made!

Sportsmen, the wildlife conservation officer needs your help. After all, he is working for you. Information such as a license number is needed. Try to get it without the violator knowing you are memorizing it. The crime scene must remain undisturbed. And above all, if an officer does make an arrest, you will be needed to testify in court as to what you saw or heard.

Here is a story about an arrest that never would have taken place had it not been for some true sportsmen. I call it "The Black Bear on Fairview."

The 1980 hunting season was winding down. It was the last day of buck season and I was patrolling State Game Lands 36. A group of hunters had just finished making a drive. I stopped to check their roster. Everything seemed in order and, like most groups of hunters, the men were ribbing each other about their hunting skills. After taking and giving some ribbing, I was getting into my vehicle to leave when one of the hunters came up and told me about four doe hides he had found in the woods. This was in an area the local people called Fairview. He gave me directions to find them. I told him I would check it out.

I had no problem finding the hides. I was able to determine they had been killed about the beginning of buck season, with slugs from a shotgun. The hides were still good, so I took them, salted them down, and added them to my pile. All WCOs gather deer hides during the fall. The Game Commission later sells these hides and the money goes into the game fund.

Checking around, I found that three nonresident hunters had stayed in a camp nearby. No one knew their names or what kind of vehicle they were driving, but someone did remember it had New Jersey plates. It was also remembered that the hunters had left at the end of the second day of buck season.

I figured these men were good suspects. Why? Well, usually we run into two types of people who use shotguns with slugs. One would be a beginning hunter whose dad is holding off for a year or two before buying him a rifle. The other is a nonresident whose home state does not allow the use of rifles—and New Jersey is one of these states.

Perhaps I should mention right here that the vast majority of nonresident hunters, be they from New Jersey or any other state, are law abiding sportsmen who cause no problems whatsoever. We're glad they like to hunt and that they like to come to Pennsylvania. But you can see how, in this instance, the evidence suggested that the violators might be from out of state.

Since the trail was now almost a month old, I decided to put the information in my little book and make a point to check the



people using the camp the following season. During the next year, every time I went by the camp I checked to see if anyone was around. No one ever was.

Well, the 1981 buck season came. The night before the season opened, we observed a van parked behind the camp. It had a New Jersey plate. I decided to let the men hunt and not check them until they were ready to go home, which I assumed would be on Tuesday night.

Early Monday I was patrolling on Armenia Mountain. It was the usual hectic opening day. My radio was giving out a constant chatter, instructing game protectors and deputies across the state to check various situations or contact various persons. About 11 a.m., the Northeast Regional Office contacted me about an illegally killed bear left lying near Fairview. This was close to the New Jersey hunters' camp, so my interest in them heightened. I contacted Deputy Charles Fox, gave him the information I had, and instructed him to go to the area dressed as a hunter. He was to just observe and not check anyone. Charlie was a deputy with 18 years experience who preferred working out of uniform, so he was the perfect person for this stakeout.

Charlie reached the area just after midday. He worked through the area, which was really thick. Fighting his way uphill, he came out on an old logging road. He looked up the road and saw a hunter. Charlie approached him and said he was lost and wanted directions. The hunter, who spoke with a thick accent, told Charlie he couldn't help him.

Fox left the hunter and walked down the logging road for several hundred yards. He met a second hunter and told him the same story—that he was lost and needed directions. This hunter also spoke with an accent. After telling Charlie he was not too familiar with the area, Charlie said he thought he'd stay on the logging road rather than go back in the woods. He knew the logging road came out near the camp of the New Jersey men. Fox found a spot where he was able to watch the camp.

At approximately 5:30 p.m., I met Fox. It was dark by then. He told me that, just at dusk, one hunter had shot in an open field near the camp but it had been too dark for him to see what the man had been shooting at.

I had earlier radioed Deputies Jerry Ross and Vaughn Ulrich to join us—which

they did. Charlie told us the men had gone back into the woods. They took their van up the old logging road, so we felt they were going to get the bear. We couldn't be sure as none of us had seen the bear or even knew its exact location. We planned to wait until they brought it out before we stopped them.

Other deputies working that day had been instructed to send any violators who wanted to settle on a field receipt to the Troy police station. I told them Ulrich and I would be there by 7 p.m. to settle cases. I left Fox and Ross on the stakeout. Ross was in uniform. These two men were experienced deputies and I felt they could handle any situation that might come up.

The deputies continued the stakeout, but as time went on Fox became a little apprehensive, he told me later. It was over three hours since the men had gone back into the woods. He and Ross began to think they might have taken another way out of the woods. The deputies discussed their plans and how they had to be sure the bear was in the hunters' possession. Finally they decided to go in. They eased their car past the camp and up the logging road. As they broke over a little knoll into a clearing, they saw the van. The headlights were on and by their light two men were skinning the bear. The third man was inside the van. The bear was almost skinned out except for the head.

The deputies got out of their vehicle and identified themselves. Ross questioned them about the bear. They told him they had found it and were just taking the skin. Jerry advised them they would have to talk to me, and they agreed to come to Troy and do that.

At this time the deputies seized the three men's firearms. They put one man in their vehicle and instructed the other two to follow in the van. They arrived at the Troy police station after 9 p.m.

Deputy Ulrich and I were still settling cases when Fox and Ross brought the three men in. After I finished settling all of the other violations, I finally got to talk to the three men.

They told me their story of finding the bear and only wanting the hide. They claimed they hadn't shot the animal. I advised them they were under arrest for possessing an illegally taken bear. I told them they could settle with me or request a hearing. The fine would be \$1200. They said they didn't have that kind of money. I advised them they would be taken to the

JP's office and if they could not post a cash bond in the amount of the fine and cost, they would be taken to jail until the hearing came up. Learning they were going to jail, they started talking in another language which I assumed was their native tongue.

As we were ready to go out the door, one man said he was sick. He was doing a good job of acting (at least I thought he was acting). He appeared in great pain. We were right next door to the Troy Hospital, so I instructed Ross and Fox to take him to the emergency room. Deputy Ulrich and I planned to take the other two men to the JP's office. I told Fox not to let the defendant out of his sight as he was still under arrest. After he was checked by the doctor, he was to be brought to the JP's office.

When Fox got the defendant to the hospital, he must have thought he had avoided jail because he started kidding with the nurses. When the doctor arrived, he examined the man and could find nothing wrong with him, so the deputies brought him to the JP's office. We were just finishing up with the paperwork. Two of the men had pleaded guilty. The third pleaded not guilty. They did not have enough money with them, so the JP typed up commitment papers while the men made some telephone calls to ensure there would be money in the morning.

On the way home we picked up the bear, a 225-pound male.

The next morning it started to rain and freeze immediately after daybreak. Everything was a sheet of ice, but we had to get to the JP's office because the defendant who had pleaded not guilty had waived his three-day waiting period and wanted a hearing in the morning. Cars were all over the place—in ditches, over banks, against trees. We stopped to phone the JP and inform him we would probably be late. He told us there was not going to be a hearing, as when he opened the office that morning a man was there to pay the fines for all three violators.

I still had the defendants' firearms, so I knew they would get in touch with me. We were at Game Commission headquarters when I told Fox to get the firearms out. That's when I learned that two of the men had been hunting deer with semi-auto-

matic shotguns. When the men did contact me, we met them again at the Troy police station. I informed them it was illegal in Pennsylvania to use a semi-automatic shotgun to hunt for deer. The two men each paid an additional \$200 in fines, settling this on field receipts. We also confiscated the firearms. I told the men their firearms would be sold at the Game Commission's gun auction.

The men got into their van, saying they were going back to New Jersey and never, never coming to Pennsylvania to hunt again.

Altogether the men had paid \$1600 in fines plus court costs of \$70.50. They also lost two expensive Browning autoloading shotguns.

About ten days later, a hunter told me he had found a doe under a pine near the cabin of the New Jersey hunters. It was along the edge of the field where Fox had heard them shoot at dusk that evening, and the doe had been shot with a rifled slug.

The season was almost over and I was at home trying to catch up on some paperwork when the phone rang. The caller, who spoke in broken English, wanted to know about the gun auction. I did not understand him and thought he wanted to know what type gun action he could use. I stated, "Pump action, lever action, bolt action."

"No!" he said, "what about gun auction?"

I still didn't understand, so I started again, "Pump action, bolt action."

"No! No! No!" he said in broken English—"I come to Pennsylvania to hunt. I get arrested. They take my gun. They sell it at gun auction. When is gun auction?"

"Oh, yes, now I know what you're talking about. You'll have to contact the Harrisburg Office. They will tell you when the sale is going to take place."

I don't know whether those fellows ever bought their firearms back or not, or what the firearms brought at the sale. The important thing about this case is two sportsmen got involved and reported what they had seen. I never would have known about either violation if the hunter on the mountain and the hunter who found the bear had not taken the time to become involved.



# Thornapples



Chuck Fergus

THE SNOW crunched lightly underfoot as I crossed the field and headed for the woods. I paused to check my boot tracks: each cleat showed up sharp-edged and clear. The snow was four inches deep, not too wet and not too dry, neither granular nor an insubstantial fluff. It was a perfect tracking snow.

At the woods' edge, in the brushy margin that separated the trees from the field, I came upon my first track: a pair of small dots, and, slightly ahead of them and spread wider apart, two large oblong marks. A rabbit track, one in a line heading into a raspberry patch. Following, I found a round depression where the rabbit had plunked its rump down on the snow; it had sheared off one of the long purple canes, leaving a smooth, angled cut, and eaten all but the thorns. The trail meandered away into a patch of pines, each track recording the telltale pattern of big marks preceding small. I tried to visualize the cottontail as it had bounded: outside back feet planting themselves ahead of the smaller front paws with each hop.

Overhead the sky was milky. The pines were a deep, dark green, and on their bough tips the candles—buds for next year's growth—shone cinnamon red. A grapevine festooned with wizened blue fruit twisted through the bare tops of aspen trees. Sumac bobs

were a rich, velvety magenta, like church carpeting.

Angling downhill, I came to a stubble field tucked in against the woods. Here the snow was crisscrossed with crows' tracks—pigeon-toed, wobbly, converging on an ear of corn pecked freshly clean. Nearby a mouse had surfaced at the base of a cornstalk, scooted across the snow, and tunneled down again next to another stalk. Its footprints were a miniature version of the rabbit's, but with a repeated squiggle left by a long tail.

In the right kind of snow, everything leaves its mark. Throughout the rest of the year the comings and goings of wild animals are secret happenings, events only rarely observed. But let a couple of inches of snow cover the ground and each footfall, wing scrape, tail flick—each nuance of behavior, each interaction, almost, it seems, each *thought*—is there for us to read.

## Open Woods

Leaving the field, I trudged through open woods where the snow capped branches, outcroppings, stumps. Soon I came upon the tracks of another bounding animal, going from tree to tree. Up a leaning snag, then down, with a six-foot leap and a feather-duster mark from the tail. This was a gray squirrel's trail. In this small sector of woods, squirrel tracks were everywhere, with an occasional scattering of leaves and hulls where one had dug up and eaten a nut. It was tempting to suppose that a dozen squirrels had been out making tracks, but I remembered an hour spent sitting on a stump when I saw one squirrel weave nearly this many tracks through the woods.

Ahead lay four large round spots about two feet across and three feet long, bare all the way down to the forest floor. Small lumps of snow lay in the leaves, and small marks pocked the snow's surface nearby; tracks of cloven hooves led away. Four deer—judging from the number and the size of the beds, two adult does and two yearlings—had been bedded here before

## Pennsylvania Game COOKBOOK



Pennsylvania Game Cookbook is a 96-page collection of delicious recipes submitted by GAME NEWS readers. It includes methods of preparing all kinds of game available in Pennsylvania, plus some recipes for moose, elk, and other species. \$4.00 delivered from GAME NEWS office.

the storm. Afterward they had risen, shaken the snow off their backs, and walked away. I followed and came upon signs of feeding: twigs torn from a witch hazel shrub, buds browsed from a maple. While a rabbit uses its sharp front incisors to nip stalks cleanly, a deer has no upper incisors so often severs twigs with its molars, tugging up and leaving a ragged cut.

Walking, a deer sets its hind foot directly in the print of the front foot on the same side. (Sometimes the prints overlap slightly, blurring the track.) What results is a line of prints, offset by the width of the deer's body. Alarmed, a deer may gallop; then its hind feet land in front of the fore feet, and it

really covers ground. Ned Smith once measured the stride of a doe he had jumped from a laurel patch. She bounded down a snowy woods road, leaving 18 feet between sets of hoof-prints. Each clutch of four prints covered 6 to 7 feet, for a complete bound totaling 24 or 25 feet.

The four deer who had left this trail were anything but panicked. I knelt and looked closely at a track. The toes were sharp-edged, the overall prints heart-shaped with the narrow portion pointing in the direction of travel. Deer tracks are not always so legible. In deeper snow the prints lie at the bottom of long shafts, where caved-in snow often obscures them. To tell which way the animal was headed, you look for a groove left by a hoof dragging up and ahead, or for particles of snow kicked forward ahead of the track. A deer track in deep snow often is little more than a trough; find one and know why old-time hunters call it a "slot."

The newer a track, the more detail it will show. On a fresh track the margins are crisp, the walls between the hooves or toes finely etched. Tracks change with time and with weather: falling temperatures may freeze prints and glaze over the marks of pads; rising temperatures or a bright sun will melt tracks outward, erasing detail.

Leaving the deer trails, I turned toward the edge of the field. I was looking for a certain track, a singular thread with which to draw myself through the day. I found it where a fencerow merged with the woods. A series of dots in a nearly straight line stretched across the snow: the trail of a fox.

In Pennsylvania we have two types of foxes, red and gray. Generally the red fox keeps to open country, while the gray favors deep woods. These particular tracks seemed to be a red's, larger and longer than a gray fox's tracks, much like a dog's save for the bar-shaped heel pad. The trail, I noted, did not wander aimlessly like a dog's but had the businesslike manner bespeak-



ing an animal that hunts for a living.

The trail skirted the woods. Now and then it went in among the trees, and I found where the fox had stuck its nose beneath a half-buried log. The tracks crossed an overgrown field, negotiated a tongue of woods, entered another reverting field. In his journal, Henry David Thoreau wrote this passage: "Here is the distinct trail of a fox stretching a quarter of a mile across the pond. Now I am curious to know what had determined its graceful curvatures, its greater or less spaces and distinctness, and how surely they were coincident with the fluctuations of some mind, why they now lead me two steps to the right, and then three to the left. . . . I know which way a mind wended this morning, what horizon it faced, by the setting of these tracks."

in the snow. The fox tracks continued.

While this encounter between predator and prey had not been hard to decipher, often the action requires more thought to puzzle out. I recalled a story told by a friend. He had found an odd-looking line in the snow: two parallel troughs half an inch deep and an inch apart. The track, or tracks, began in an expanse of fresh, unbroken snow and continued along in a straight line. They broke through the white hummocks above buried logs and sticks. They went 50, 75 yards—and vanished. Casting ahead, my friend picked up the trail again. Indeed it was a trail and not a tunnel that had suddenly surfaced. He looked up. No overhead wire had dumped its load of snow. Finally he came to a depression with some brown fur in it and a patch



—DOUG PIFER—

The trail pulled me on. At the head of a brushy draw the regularly spaced tracks suddenly bunched, then stretched into a run. Instinctively I sped up my own pace. The tracks converged with another set of prints, a rabbit's, at the mouth of a woodchuck hole. No blood, no marks of a struggle

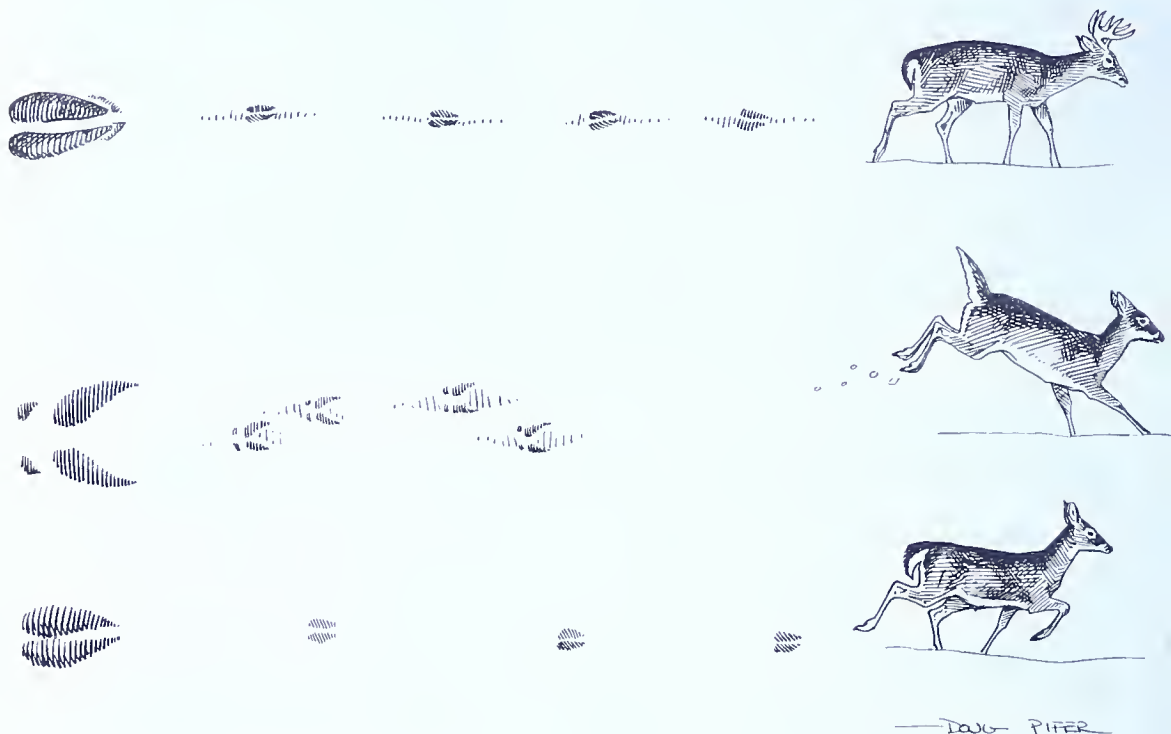
of blood. Checking around, he spotted a stump. On top he found a pile of entrails, a rabbit's legs, and the X-shaped footmarks of an owl. The bird had flown along with the prey clasped in its talons; the rabbit's dangling hind feet had dragged across the snow.

I got the thermos out of my daypack, poured a cup, and drank; the chocolate-coffee mix was hot and renewing. I set off again in light that was growing dimmer. The clouds had thickened, and behind them the winter sun was on its way down.

When the fox on its circuit went

predator's tracks turned away and lined across a field.

As a hunter of grouse, I considered the thwarted kill, the denied meal. The tracks I followed belonged to a hungry fox. It had been out for several hours and had not gotten any food. I was plenty hungry myself and about ready



from one likely feeding area to another, it left a straight, trotting track; when it got down to serious hunting, the prints paused, bunched, crept. I found no sign of a kill.

The fox's trail crossed a narrow stream. On the hill above the stream the fox had slowed and wandered, circling around small islands of brush. I soon saw why: ruffed grouse tracks wandered through the crabapple and grapevine thickets. In winter, a grouse dons snowshoes. Fine hairlike protrusions grow out to fringe the toes, increasing the foot's surface area and allowing the bird to walk on top of the snow. The grouse had been feeding on fallen grapes, but apparently the birds had left before the fox arrived, for the

to call it quits when the tracks slowed from their steady tireless trot. They turned to one side and bunched: forepaws tucked, the back paws and lower shanks of the legs both printing. The fox had crouched and leapt. From a tangle of snow and leaves, a single blood-drop shone. She had killed, then, a mouse or a shrew, and bolted her prey down: a meal, if not a feast.

The tracks began to circle, probably heading for a bed. The fox had passed here hours ago, and now she would be rested and ready to hunt again. I stopped. There was no need to try to see her; it seemed I'd been keeping her company all afternoon.

(This article originally appeared in *Country Journal*.)





A way to archery on . . .

## WHEELS!

By Keith C. Schuyler

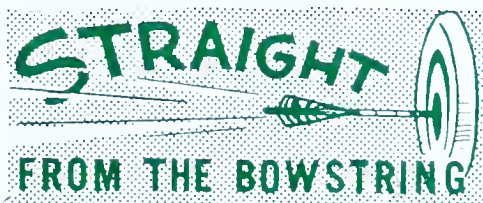
**T**HE TITLE for these paragraphs has many connotations for the average person who thinks in terms of getting from here to there at a fast pace, on two, three or four wheels, on a vehicle powered by an internal combustion engine. But for fellows like Charles E. Focht, West Sunbury, wheels are the substitute for enforced sedentary activities—in this case archery.

Chuck, like a number of others confined to wheelchairs, is frequently seen at regular Pennsylvania FITA tournaments where he competes against those with no physical handicaps. To do so, these archers must be members of the state organization and international organizations. Aside from the impracticality of retrieving their own arrows, they shoot under the same fundamental rules those with no physical handicaps do. The major FITA classes utilize conventional bows, but there are classes for the compound.

Although bow hunters frequently practice from various positions, including kneeling, shooting from a chair is

not a posture normally assumed. Yet those who have no choice other than to sit in their mobile chairs are traditionally handicapped because their seats are certainly less than stable platforms. Added to that hardship are the physical adjustments some must make to accommodate for the lack of full movement of their limbs.

Nevertheless, Focht wasn't discouraged from pursuing a dream to have Pennsylvania host the first United States world-class tournament for wheelchair archers under sanction of the United States National Wheelchair Association. The challenge was indeed formidable. For a starter, it was necessary to find a location and get the blessing of the Association. There also was the matter of money; \$15,000 was





**GARY MATTHEWS, right, Huntingdon, PA, should look pleased; he just garnered first place in the class of tetraplegics who shot full double FITA. GUY GRUN, Belgium, was top archer at the tournament as well as the leading scorer at 70 and 90 meters.**

needed to fund the U.S. team, pay for medals and trophies, set up and run the archery field and other incidental costs. There were also such expenses as \$550 to transport, house and fund each U.S. team member.

Focht has some muscle—other than that needed to draw his bow—as a member of the Committee for the Disabled within the Pennsylvania Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. He received a go-ahead from the Council, which is chaired by former Pittsburgh Steeler Franco Harris. After a meeting with Focht by Harris and Roland Makibbin, president, and Paul Graham, director of Central Pennsylvania Telephone Pioneers, fund raising was taken on by that organization. The Pioneers is one of ten members of the Keystone State Chapter of Independent Telephone Pioneers Association, a national organization domiciled in Washington, D.C. A site was offered on the spacious lawn at Hershey Medical Center, just west of Hershey. The long active Lancaster Archery Club agreed to take charge of on-site details and assistance. Housing would be at Hershey Convention Center.

All that remained was approval by International Stoke Mandeville Games Federation, and that was obtained at a meeting of the Federation in July of 1986. Juila Bowers, nationally renowned archery instructor and coach at Millersville University, and Bud Fowkes, international figure in archery, were engaged as coaches of the U.S. team for what was billed as the International Wheelchair Archery Championship. Dates, rain or shine, were set for May 26–29, 1987.

Invitations were sent out to world members, and positive responses were received from France, Great Britain, Canada, Finland, Belgium, Austria and Italy. Wheelchair archery has been well developed in Europe. In addition, 16 U.S. members indicated their acceptance. In total, 43 participants were present for the opening arrow on May 26.

One volunteer scorer was assigned to each participant. Most were members of the Lancaster Archery Club.

In international competition there are two classes for wheelchair archers. One, the largest class, is for paraplegics—those who are disabled from the waist down. The other is for tetraple-



**MOMENTS** were tense as the grueling four-day contest neared its end. Altogether, 43 competitors, from seven nations, participated in the tournament.

gics, those who have four limbs affected. If their disabilities are such that they can compete, tetraplegics may shoot in the same class with paraplegics, or they may shoot the double FITA round, which is the standard, in a separate event.

A rather complicated system, which takes into account the extent of physical disability, is used to determine the class for each participant. For example, compound bows are permitted only for tetraplegics in a separate class. And, in a sub-class within this group, mechanical releases are permitted with both recurve and compound bows. "Tetras" may have the bow bandaged or strapped to the hand, and a splint may be bandaged to the bow arm. They may also have a person load their arrows into the bow. Such persons must not give the archer any verbal or other assistance, especially regarding the spotting of arrows.

### Strict Rules

Strict rules govern adjustment to wheelchairs for comfort or protection of bows. No adjustments, however, may be made to assist in shooting. One large and one small wheel of the chair must be on either side of the line when the archer is shooting.

In the Double FITA event, with 22 contestants who represented each of the competing nations, M. H. Murray, Great Britain, was out in front with a score of 1169 at the end of the first round. Californian Dick Graham was only 2 points behind for second, and Kari Autio, Finland, was but 6 points off the pace with a 1163. In fourth place was Guy Grun, Belgium, down by 15 points. Grun, however, came on strong in the final two days and took the gold with 2358. Graham held on for the silver, but A. Denys, Canada, nosed out Autio for the bronze.

In the Ladies' Double FITA, Great



Britain's Karen Watts had a shaky lead of 3 points over Sirkka-Liissa Collin, Finland, with 1126 at the end of the first round. Susan Hagel, U.S.A., was down but 8 points for third. At the end, however, Finland had picked up 6 points to take first away from Watts by 3, while Hagel held onto the bronze for the U.S.A. Actually, Hagel climbed 25 points in the last round over Collin and 32 over Watts, but it was just not enough.

Gary Matthew captured the gold over Great Britain's Ernie Arnold in the Men's Tetra FITA. In the FITA contest for Tetra Men's Compound, all four entries were from the U.S.A., and Dan Erickson took the gold with 964, a 9-point margin over Michael Stauner, who claimed the silver medal. Dick Spizzirri took the bronze.

Austria's Gerhard Frank took the gold in the Short (50 and 30 meters) Metric Tetra Men over Piero Meercandelli, Italy, with 1108. In the same class with the compound, Finland's Martti Rantavuori won comfortably with 1105, followed by Donald Lapara, U.S.A., with 979, to claim gold and silver medals respectively.

Char Bragg, U.S.A. received a gold in the Short Tetra Ladies, and Jenny

**CHARLES FOCHT, West Sunbury, saw his dream (and hard work) come to fruition as he directed the first international wheelchair archery tournament in this country to a resounding success.**

Peterson, U.S.A. took the gold for the same event with the compound. Neither had competition for their events.

As in standard FITA competition, a gold was awarded if one or two participated in an event; both gold and silver for three entries; gold, silver and bronze when there were four or more contestants.

In the team competition, utilizing scores of the top contenders from each nation, Finland was well out in front with 6798. Great Britain was second with 6733, followed by the U.S.A. with 6666. Italy was fourth with 6654; France fifth, 6518. In the ladies' class, Great Britain won handily with 6448, followed by the U.S.A. with 6136.

At the various distances during the entire tournament, Belgium's Guy Grun had the highest scores at 90 and 70 meters, and he was third at 30 meters. Lasse Vapamaa, Finland, was tops at 30 meters followed by P. Lajancomme, France. Dick Graham, U.S.A., took second at 90 meters and third at 70. Kari Autio, Finland, was third at 90 and first at 50. S. Gregory, Great Britain, was second at 70. Alec Denys, Canada, was second at 50 me-

ters, and M. H. Merray, Great Britain was but a point behind at third.

Susan Hagel, U.S.A., was tops for the ladies at 50 and 30 meters, and she was third at 70 and 60. Karen Watts, Great Britain, led at 70, was second at 60 and 50. Finland's Sirkka-Liissa Collins claimed second high score at 70, first at 60, and second at 30. Ann Gray, Great Britain, was third at both 50 and 30 meters.

Following the shooting on Friday, an awards banquet was held at Hershey Lodge for some of the most courageous and dedicated athletes in the world—those on wheels!



### **Agency Bequeathed \$29,452**

Glenn Eugene Vance, a longtime native of Middleport, Ohio, bequeathed \$29,452 to the Pennsylvania Game Commission, "to be used for the preservation of wildlife." The avid sportsman and retired mink farmer, noted for his benevolence towards charitable organizations, directed that his estate be divided equally among the Pennsylvania Game Commission, the Virginia Game and Inland Fisheries Commission, and the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. On accepting the bequest Executive Director Peter Duncan noted that Mr. Vance's generosity would be put to good use, furthering the agency's commitment to protect and enhance our state's wildlife resources for future generations to enjoy.





William J. Stephens

**EXPERIMENTS** with wildcat cartridges have led to the manufacturing of several popular commercial rounds, the 22-250, for example. The 22 Cheetah, above, is among today's best known wildcats.

## The Impact of the Wildcat

By Don Lewis

Photos by Helen Lewis

**J**UST TO GET this column off on the right foot, the title is not to be construed as a thesis on Pennsylvania's secretive bobcat that is frequently sighted in some northcentral counties. The wildcat I have in mind is a cartridge.

The term wildcat for a cartridge is ambiguous, intriguing, and is perhaps somewhat formidable. One could speculate it means power and speed, something above and beyond that of a conventional cartridge. However, that's not the case. A wildcat cartridge is simply one that is not manufactured for commercial or military purposes. In essence, it's nothing more than a conventional cartridge case reformed or

fire-formed into a different version of itself, or a case that is necked or swaged to a larger or smaller caliber, or a combination of such changes.

An example of fire-forming is shooting a conventional 25-06 Remington cartridge in a 25-06 chamber that has had a sharper shoulder angle. When the cartridge is fired, the brass case forms to the new dimensions of the chamber and a wildcat is born. For example, the wildcat 22 K-Hornet came about when Lysle Kilbourn changed the gentle 5 degree 38 minute angle of the original case to a sharp 40 degree slope. Blowing out the case gave more powder capacity. In the original case, a max load of Hercules 2400 pow-

**WILDCATting** with the 22 Hornet, left, Lysle Kilbourn created the 22 K-Hornet, right. With its sharper shoulder angle the new case was able to hold significantly more powder and give higher velocities.

especially when using a faster twist (like Kimber's 1-14 twist) than the standard 1-16 that factory Hornets carried for years.

Back in the gaslight era, gunsmiths would wildcat a cartridge in an attempt to fill a gap that no commercial cartridge quite handled. Some wildcat attempts had one specific improvement in mind. In the varmint realm, I must admit that velocity was the prime goal. Wildcatters dreamed of velocities in the mile-a-second category. They might have made it, too, if they could have kept the bullet in one piece and on course.

Wildcats are not always sharp-shouldered, weird creations used only by guncranks and eccentric cartridge designers. The 22 Hornet that got rave notices in the early '30s is essentially the black powder 22 Winchester Centerfire cartridge. In a larger example, firearms history reports that Winchester brought out their 270 cartridge in 1925 in their Model 54 bolt action rifle. The 270 is a 30-06 case necked down to accept the 277-diameter bullet. It retained the 17½ degree shoulder angle of the 30-06. Reducing bullet diameter from 308 to 277 gave birth to a new cartridge.

I have no statistics to make this assumption, but it's possible that 30-06 varmint shooters weren't satisfied with the accuracy offered with short lightweight bullets in the 100 to 130-grain group and experimented with smaller diameters and longer bullets. I've found that bullets of 150 grains and up were more accurate in the 30-06 than lighter weights. As history has proved, the 270 mated perfectly with the 130-grain bullet. It also is very accurate with lighter bullets. That simple operation on the neck of the 30-06 cartridge six decades back gave the big game fraternity not only an excellent

der gave the 40-grain bullet a velocity of 2640, according to Speer's No. 9 manual. In the Kilbourn version, Speer's Wildcat Manual lists a maximum load of the same powder that increases the 40-grain bullet's velocity by several hundred foot seconds. Fire-forming the case to less tapered sides and a sharper shoulder angle made room for considerably more powder.

In chronographing both cartridges, I didn't get as great a spread in muzzle velocity as the manuals indicated. There was a significant difference, however, and enlarging the case capacity did make it possible to notably increase velocity with max-type loads.

The usual idea behind the wildcat is to make a more accurate or higher velocity load than the parent cartridge. Over the years I have fired only two or three 22 Hornets that were in the inch-at-100-yards category. I am convinced that the K-Hornet is more accurate,





**COMPARED TO the 22-250, left, the 22 Cheetah has a larger case. Although the Cheetah offers more speed, it remains to be seen whether or not this new creation will become a commercial round.**

cartridge, but also a most controversial one.

I used a 25 Niedner Improved (forerunner of the Remington 25-06) for chucks for two or three summers. The 25 Niedner is the 30-06 case necked down to accept the 257 bullet. It is supposed to be the first wildcat to gain attention. In the improved version, the neck was given a sharper angle than on the original 30-06 case, providing a little more powder capacity. I shot hundreds of rounds both on the range and in the chuck pastures, but, despite all I thought it had to offer in the early 1960s, I am now convinced the 25 Improved Niedner has no more to offer than today's 25-06.

I have mentioned that the advent of the 22 Hornet ushered in a new era for varmint hunting fans. The new cartridge was supposed to be the ultimate for 200-yard varmint shooting. When I delve through the pages of gun and ballistic manuals, I often wonder how that theory ever got started. The Hornet came along in the 1930s and held the spotlight for several decades, with only the 218 Bee giving any serious competition, but a half-dozen other excellent varmint cartridges were in use or being experimented with long before the advent of the Hornet and through the early years of its highest popularity.

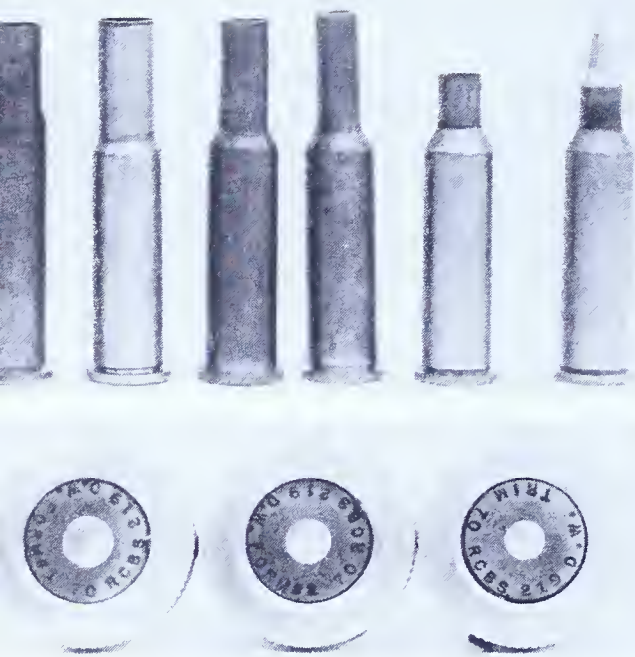
### **Savage 22 High-Power**

One was the Savage 22 High-Power. It could muster over 3200 fps muzzle velocity with a 55-grain bullet and rub the 3000 fps mark with a 70-grain slug. This load had been on the market since 1912. And let's not overlook the Savage 250-3000 and Ned Roberts' 257 for the long range shooter. The 250-3000 made its appearance in 1915. Ned Roberts experimented with his 257 back in the 1920s, and Remington standardized a slight modification of it in 1934. For a



major factory to standardize a wildcat cartridge proves that Roberts' 257 wildcat had a lot of followers.

The Hornet was developed in the late 1920s, and Savage introduced it in their Model 23-D in 1932. Winchester followed suit in 1933, chambering their Model 54 for it. Many claim it was the Hornet's low noise level that appealed to varmint hunters of that period. I can't fully believe that as many cartridge designers were working overtime to get more velocity. Higher velocities normally come from heavier powder charges, which give a much higher noise level. So I have reservations about that being a valid claim. I'm inclined to believe that the Hornet became popular because it and varmint shooting were given a lot of publicity in those long-gone years. Gun writers and rifle manufacturers were beginning to see that varmint shooting could become a major sport with the right equipment. The Hornet cartridge was brand new, and it had all the



requisites to play the starring role—high velocity and fine accuracy—and the presses began to roll.

I'm quick to admit the tiny Hornet has a certain appeal. It is powerful for its size, and the hunter who previously had to keep his 22 rimfire shots below the 100-yard range was no doubt overwhelmed by the Hornet's 200-yard potential. I'm certain the Hornet's appeal didn't derive from it being the best varmint cartridge during the years of the 220 Swift, 22 Savage High-Power, 257 Roberts, and wildcat versions such as the 2R Lovell and Jerry Gebby's famous 22-250 Varminter. Colonel Townsend Whelen, a major contributor to the Hornet cartridge, was a highly respected gunwriter and firearms expert. He was unquestionably the driving force behind the success of the Hornet.

Why a wildcat cartridge in the first place? I partly answered that early in this column, but I want to pursue the thought a little further.

It is generally written that wildcaters of the past (maybe even today) conscientiously tried to build a better cartridge out of an existing one, fill a niche in the cartridge lineup, or give birth to a creation that would fall into the

**HARVEY DONALDSON'S 219 Wasp**, Lewis's favorite, is created from the 30-30 Winchester case, using swaging dies, below. In the '40s, most Wasp cases were made from 219 Zippers—an easier chore—but Zipper cases are difficult to find now, while 30-30s are common.

“greatest ever” category. Their efforts make interesting reading and lend a certain degree of credence to wildcatting, but it's not exactly the truth.

Wildcatting was getting a strong foothold about the time the Hornet appeared. Gun manufacturers and ammo makers were mostly indifferent about new cartridges; they were satisfied with the status quo. Furthermore, at that time there was plenty of room for new designs, and the wildcatters jumped right in.

Without sophisticated equipment like pressure barrels and today's chronographs, there was no way to precisely analyze a new creation. Designers did what they could. Cartridges of known muzzle velocities were fired into steel plates for depth measurement. If a new creation of the same caliber and bullet weight sunk a hole a little deeper, it was assumed it had a higher velocity, and maybe rightfully so. Here we meet the word “estimation.” Another word that teamed up with estimation was “exaggeration.” That's how most wildcatters determined the velocities of their new creations; in most instances they doubtless estimated and then exaggerated.

Another fallacy was the belief that if old Jake who had been fooling around with cartridge designs for years came up with a so-called winner, it had to be good. I can understand the feeling of respect that Jake might deserve, but that doesn't prove his cartridge was superior to its contemporaries. Still, master gun builders and wildcatters like my friend P. O. Ackley produced some excellent variations of conventional cartridges. Now that the chronograph is a common piece of equipment, handloaders working with many of these older cartridges find readouts far short of early estimations. It's obvious



why the longevity of most wildcats was so short.

More proof stems from the fact that hundreds—and I mean hundreds—of designs were attempted, but most died unknown and unwanted. Nevertheless, some old creations still linger in the hearts of veteran wildcatters. Cartridges such as the A1 Marcianti's Blue Streak, the 22-3000, Harvey Donaldson's 219 Wasp, (my favorite) and the 6mm/30-30. I could easily name a dozen more that had their moments of glory and then rode off into the sunset.

If many of these wildcats were useless, and we know only a few survived the test of time, what was the total impact of the homemade cartridge? Since I have a deep affection for wildcats, I will put forth my point of view.

The wildcat's biggest contribution perhaps was not necessarily in the form of a faster cartridge, though high velocity got a great percentage of the publicity. Admittedly, the 22-250 and 25-06 open the door for argument here, but I believe wildcatting is primarily a form of research and experiment. Whether it's done on a professional factory level or in a small gunshop by an experienced wildcatter, it's an attempt to improve. Improvements normally come from those dedicated to a belief that progress is a necessity, no matter what it costs. While most experiments



#### Question

If I do not sell my furs after the end of the season, may I keep them and sell them next year?

#### Answer

Yes, provided that you get a permit from a Wildlife Conservation Officer prior to 10 days after the close of the season and list all of the furs you are holding over.

fail or at least do not come up to expectations, the thin thread of hope is kept alive.

With the vast array of top quality ammo available today, there might not seem to be much room for improvement. If that philosophy becomes permanent, then we will always have only what is available now. The true wildcatter believes he'll eventually come up with a better cartridge. He believes that just as implicitly as the old prospector of the West believed, "Thar's gold in them thar hills." Long live the wildcatter.

### Cover Painting by George Lavanish

Snowshoe hares inhabit the most remote areas of the state. Rare throughout their range here, snowshoes may be found in timbered areas and laurel thickets across the northern half of the state, and probably are most abundant in the swamps and bogs of the northeast. Snowshoes were more common at the turn of the century, when regenerating forests provided optimum habitat. As the forests matured, though, snowshoes declined. Snowshoes are fond of grasses, shrubs and twigs, but unlike most other rabbits and hares, snowshoes are known to also eat carrion. In autumn their color starts to change from brown to white. In winter they're all white, except for their black ear tips. Look for tracks of the snowshoe this winter. They're similar to a cottontail's, but larger and the toes on the hind feet spread to form "snowshoes." Consider yourself lucky if you see one, though. At this time of the year the animal is primarily nocturnal.

# *In the wind*

bob mitchell



A draft of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's supplemental environmental impact statement on migratory bird hunting was recently released. It was prepared to address the effects the experimental stabilized waterfowl seasons in effect from 1980 through 1984 have had on waterfowl populations. Prior to that time waterfowl seasons were adjusted annually. Among the new report's recommendations are that sport hunting of waterfowl be continued and that the effort to keep regulations stabilized remain in effect.

**In early October, as reported in *Gun Week*, wildlife officers from Wyoming and Utah, with assistance from other state and federal officers, conducted a cooperative roadcheck along I-80. In four days, 15,000 vehicles—all the non-commercial westbound traffic—were stopped. Of those, 4500 were carrying hunters. Evidence of game law violations were found in less than 4 percent of those checked.**

For the fourth consecutive year the number of hunting licenses sold in the United States declined. In 1986-87, 15,773,190, were sold, down from the previous year's 15,879,572. Hunting license revenues, however, rose to \$322,595,097, a 7 percent increase over the previous year's total. Since 1923, reports the Wildlife Management Institute, hunters have paid a total of \$4.3 billion in license fees and, since 1937, another \$1.7 billion in excise taxes on shooting equipment through the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program (P-R).

Satellites are proving to be excellent tools for monitoring a variety of wildlife, and their use has provided valuable information on many species. As reported in *National Wildlife*, satellites have been used to track transmitter-equipped humpback whales, caribou, sea turtles, polar bears and manatees. With the humpbacks, for example, the modern equipment records latitude, longitude and depth of the animal, how long it remains submerged, and even the temperature of the surrounding water. Plans are under way to use satellites to track camels, kangaroos, saltwater crocodiles, elephants and gorillas.

**The National Wildlife Federation recently gave its 5000th "Backyard Habitat Certificate." The Federation launched the program in 1973 to promote the development of wildlife habitat in urban and suburban areas, and to get more people directly involved with wildlife management.**

Many state and federal biologists met with a group of industrial foresters last fall to address the problem of declining woodcock numbers. As reported by the Wildlife Management Institute, a significant amount of woodcock nesting habitat is owned by timber companies in northeastern United States and Canada. It was generally agreed upon that a team of biologists in each state be appointed to help commercial foresters develop timber management practices that enhance conditions for woodcock. Among other suggestions is that federal permits be required of people who hunt woodcock—and other webless migratory birds—so they can be solicited to provide much needed harvest information.

After 85 years the Interior Department is planning on reorganizing its Bureau of Reclamation to better serve the public. Since it was formed the bureau has concentrated on building dams and irrigation channels in the West. Now, it's proposed that the Bureau be reduced, moved from Washington, D.C. to Denver, Colorado, and concentrate instead on water conservation and the development of recreational opportunities.





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**COVER PAINTING BY ROD ARBOGAST**  
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PENNSYLVANIA GAME NEWS (ISSN 0031-451X) is published monthly for \$6.00 per year, \$16.50 for three years, or membership in Pennsylvania's Cooperative Farm-Game Project or Safety Zone Project; to Canada and all other foreign countries, \$7.00 U.S. currency, per year. Published by the Pennsylvania Game Commission, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, Pa. 17110-9797. Phone (717) 787-4250. Second-class postage paid at Harrisburg, Pa. CHANGE OF ADDRESS: POSTMASTER: Send both old and new addresses to Pennsylvania Game Commission. Allow six weeks for processing. Material accepted is subject to our requirements for editing and revising. Author payment covers all rights and title to accepted material, including manuscripts, photographs, drawings and illustrations. No information contained in this magazine may be used for advertising or commercial purposes. Copyright © 1988 by the Pennsylvania Game Commission. All rights reserved.

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## Common Bonds

**M**EN and WOMEN, doctors and teachers, lawyers and farmers, housewives and mechanics, the Pennsylvania Game Commission's deputy force is comprised of people from all walks of life, each sharing the common bond of caring so much about our wildlife resources that they've dedicated themselves to perpetuating our state's rich wildlife heritage for future generations to enjoy.

Pennsylvanians are fortunate to have such a corps of dedicated volunteers. Although several states have tried to implement similar programs, ours is the only state in which such an effort has succeeded. This success possibly lies in the fact the roots of the agency's deputy program are intertwined with the very beginnings of the agency itself. The 1895 act which created the Pennsylvania Game Commission authorized appointment of ten game protectors, which included the Chief Game Protector, the equivalent of today's executive director. In the early years, however, the agency had to rely solely on legislative appropriations and monies weren't being appropriated to cover salaries or even expenses. In essence, therefore, the first Game Commission officers were volunteers. Subsequent arrangements were made giving officers one-half of the fines they collected.

It was still obvious, however, that a law enforcement program, especially a new one, was going to require substantially more than ten officers if it was to ever be effective. As a result, the formal deputy program was launched. Initially, those interested in becoming deputies had to be sponsored by a sportsmen's organization, and it was up to the sponsoring group to satisfy the applicant's salary and expense needs.

In July 1903, seven deputies were appointed, and by the end of that year the deputy force had risen to 30. A year later there were 46, and by 1923, 400. During the Depression of the '30s, when economic conditions enticed more people to violate game laws, the number of deputies rose to over 700. Today there are approximately 1000.

Just as their ranks have grown, so too have the responsibilities today's deputies assume. They must pass rigorous tests and character checks, undergo substantial initial and in-service training, and are called upon to assume myriad duties other than law enforcement. Today's deputies are just as likely to be found in a backyard handling a nuisance animal complaint or at a Game Commission exhibit explaining and, at times, defending agency policies and programs, as they are to be found on jacklight surveillance or investigating a hunting accident. And as in the past, today's deputies work, for the most part, at their own expense.

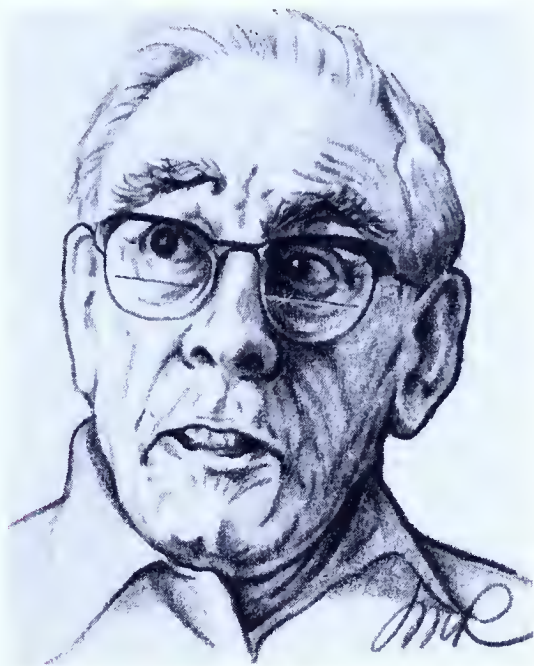
Regional quotas have been established limiting to approximately 1200 the number of deputies that may be appointed. Those regional quotas are further broken down by districts, establishing a maximum number of deputies permitted in each according to its size, population and other factors. While we're nearly at a full complement, there are some districts where additional deputies are needed.

Deputies share a common bond: a dedicated commitment to protecting and enhancing our state's rich wildlife resources, at the expense of making great sacrifices. This bond is shared not just among the deputies of the 1980s, but also among those from the past who've held the distinction of being a Pennsylvania Deputy Wildlife Conservation Officer. — *Bob Mitchell*



# Ground Sleuthing

By Mary Myers



**LYLE "CAP" WILCOX, my father, a former Tioga County game warden, forever felt Canyon Country was not just his home, but also his responsibility. That's why I wasn't surprised to find myself driving him there one dusty fall day in 1972. He had a mystery to solve.**

**W**HEN MY father, Lyle "Cap" Wilcox, was a young man he served as a Game Warden in Tioga County. Along with men he liked and respected, he protected its wildlife, nurtured its orphaned young, fought its forest fires, and planted its barrens. And although he left the Game Commission in the 1930s, he practiced its disciplines for the rest of his life. Pennsylvania's Canyon Country was not only his home but also, he felt, his responsibility.

That's why I wasn't surprised to find myself driving him into Canyon Country one dusty fall day in 1972. Dad was 79 that year, and his lifelong lean hardness was getting brittle as he edged into his 80s. His interest in the high flats around us, however, was as keen as ever, intensifying as we neared the East Rim of the Canyon. A quiet little cemetery there was reported to have been vandalised. Authorities had found a beer can in a ditch, and the local newspaper added that the youths suspected of the wanton destruction were being closely watched.

Dad had laid the paper down and said, "Hmmm." Heedless youth had become another cause for him to champion—ever since he outgrew being one himself, that is, "Pick me up when you get out of work, will you, Mary?"

As we passed a stand of trees on the left, Dad suddenly called, "Whoa." We were there. We got out and walked

across the road to the edge of the cemetery.

"Oh my, would you look at that!" Dad breathed.

In the first row ahead of us, seven narrow headstones, white with age under their dollops of weather stain, stood sentinel in staunch order. The eighth lay ignominiously on its ancient face. The slot behind it, where it had been rooted so long in the earth, was now widened to a gaping wound across the grave itself. In row on uneven row beyond, all the way back and out to the arborvitae walls, other headstones leaned or lay inappropriately beside their upstanding old neighbors. But it was the randomly torn away ground that shocked me most. I tried not to see the raw earth indecently exposed where only grass should be.

"Who would do such a thing?" I asked, stumbling forward.

Dad laid his hand on my shoulder. "Now, Daughter, this fact finding mission has already been all but tramped



**"AND LOOK over here. It's a female; she comes in here with her cub. Here's a smaller print. Maybe she brings two of 'em. Twins, maybe, considering the acreage they're digging up."**

out. I don't need any more footprints on this burial ground. There's lots of myrtle around that stone bench over there. Why don't you go over and sit a while? I won't be very long."

"Okay," I said.

Despite the fact I was a grown woman and a grandmother of six, I felt thoroughly squelched, like the time Dad had me out with the bird dogs and asked me to identify some animal sign. I, so anxious to impress him with my outdoor knowledge, proudly replied, "woodchuck droppings." They were a bear's.

I watched Dad move slowly, from one ripped up patch to another, stooping to feel with his finger tips the in-

dentations perhaps too shallow for his eyes to see. Now and then he flicked a bit of soil aside, tilting his chin awkwardly to check the results with his bifocals. His arthritis had to be killing him, but he looked as happy as a kid with a new toy. I wouldn't have called or gone to help him for the world. What was he finding out there? The air around me was faintly resinous with the heat from the flat, braided needles of the arborvitae.

"Yo!" Dad shouted. "Wake up, Mary, and get over here. Here's your evidence. Look! See?"

I ran over and looked, but saw nothing but dried lumpy dirt. But when I followed Dad's big-knuckled finger, slight ridges of soil began to make a pattern. No woodchuck droppings to factor in here, but I still was hesitant. "Bear claws?" I asked uncertainly. "A bear did this? It wasn't kids at all, but a bear instead?"

"Sure thing!" Dad was almost running, pulling me along. "And look over

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here. It's a female; she comes in here with her cub. Here's a smaller print. Maybe she brings two of 'em. Twins, maybe, considering the acreage they're digging up."

"But what are they digging for? And why here?"

Dad grinned, obviously pleased he had worked out the answers. "I couldn't find one for you, but Mama bear knows they're here. And she's teaching her young 'uns to find 'em, too. Grubs, Mary. Larvae of some beetle hatch that just happens to like it here. They're as tasty as a shrimp cocktail to bears, and because of the dry weather there's not much of a berry crop around. A hungry bear wouldn't let a tombstone or some manicured sod get in the way of supper. They're nothing but slight impediments to a bear."

"Yes, but how did she know where to dig in the first place?"

"A skunk showed her. See here? See where he was digging? And a mole probably showed him. News spreads fast when winter's coming on and the belly's flapping loose."

"Well! You batted in another one,

Dad. And you've certainly exonerated the kids. I'll stop at the sheriff's office tomorrow. Everybody will be relieved—they'll be grateful—for your detective work."

Dad was rolling a cigarette. He caught the disc on the string of the little cloth bag in his teeth, pulling it shut one-handed with the ease of long practice. "No, no thanks needed," he said expansively. "I had time for a little investigating this afternoon. Anyhow, about all I'm doing these days is waiting for the next Social Security check or the inevitable hour, whichever comes first. No, no hardship on my part. Let's go home."

Cap died January 30, 1980. You'll notice from the date that the awaited inevitable hour came to him first, beating out the Social Security check by one day. We had to return the check. He would have had something very pertinent to say about that.

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# Potpinki Pickin'

By Mike Raykovicz

I DON'T know how I ever got to be so fond of the outdoors. My earliest recollections of going to the woods are of the occasional trips on which my parents took my brother Joe and me when they went hunting for mushrooms. My father was a coal miner who had no interest in the outdoors, save for the times he took us "Potpinkie pickin'. Potpinkie or, if you prefer, popinkie, are mushrooms from a small genus of fungi known botanically as *Armillarias*. The common potpinkie or Honey Armillaria is generally found throughout temperate areas. It's known for causing root rot in oak and other hardwoods. They sometimes occur singly but are usually found in dense clusters. They are quite common in northeastern Pennsylvania and are sought by many people during the fall. My father didn't know all that. His only interest was in the fact that they were good to eat and that they tasted even better when Mom served them over a big T-bone.

## Seasonal Delicacy

Every September, around the 19th, Dad would announce to the family that on the upcoming weekend we would be venturing to some obscure farm near Tunkhannock to begin our annual search for this seasonal delicacy. Ten years of age, I couldn't care less about mushrooms. My thrill came from anticipating the great outdoor adventure awaiting me. I really did enjoy going. The trip gave me an excuse to strap on the genuine hunting knife I had earned by scouring the streets of Wilkes-Barre, collecting Popsicle bags. For only 500 sticky, gooy, ant infested bags, Popsicle Pete would send either a camera or the hunting knife. (I had already received the camera.) The knife was special because I took a big chance my mother would not go into

hysterics over my obtaining it. I collected Popsicle bags for what seemed like an eternity and finally worked up enough nerve to send for it. After it arrived in the mail, it took me several weeks to show it to her.

"What on earth are you going to do with that?", she asked.

"I'm going to use it when Dad takes us Potpinkie picking," I replied.

Apparently Mom was agreeable to anything that would fill the half-bushel baskets we used.

Although on my way to becoming a true outdoorsman, I knew I had to have something Popsicle Pete couldn't deliver — not for all the Popsicle bags in the world — before I really belonged in the woods. I absolutely had to have the one piece of outdoor equipment that was essential to my next trip afield. It was something some of my older friends already had. It was to become an obsession. I had to have a genuine Red Ryder BB gun.

I vividly recall asking, no, begging for a Red Ryder each time Christmas and my birthday rolled around. There was nothing I ever wanted more. It seemed every comic book I had in the house had Red Ryder and his partner Little Beaver on the back cover, extolling the virtues of Daisy BB guns. I stared at those back covers until my eyes grew bleary. I knew every line of that rifle: the wooden stock with Red Ryder's name spelled out with a lasso, and the honest to goodness genuine leather lace tied to the saddle ring. Boy, how I wanted that gun! But every time I pleaded with my father I received the same answer: "Are you crazy?" You could knock someone's eye out with a thing like that."

I didn't give up. I had great plans. I just couldn't go potpinkie picking again without that gun. I was too young at the time to have heard of subliminal





BOB  
SOPCHICK

perception, but I had the theory worked out and never even knew it. I resorted to underhanded tricks no self-respecting son should ever play on his father. I decided Red Ryder and Little Beaver would be everywhere in our house. Dad just had to see what a neat gun it was and how I absolutely had to have it to protect kith and kin whenever we took the yearly trip to Tunkhannock.

I made sure I got an adequate supply of comic books featuring my heroes on the back covers. Never mind the titles. If Red and Little Beaver appeared on the back cover, I traded for it. I remember swallowing hard the day I had to give up two Bugs Bunnys for one Plastic Man. I hated Plastic Man. Bugs was funny. Plastic Man wasn't even believable. But never mind, I had what I wanted.

### Subliminal Advertising

During the summer, while my parents worked the day shift, I carefully placed my subliminal advertising in strategic places throughout the house. I cleared the magazine rack and carefully placed the ad for the Daisy rifle where my father couldn't help but see it. At the foot of the stairs my mother had a small table on which she kept a statue of St. Francis of Assisi. St. Francis stood with his arms extended and had birds of every description perched about him. My mother loved birds, but if I was to ever get my rifle, St. Francis had to go. I moved him to the parlor, where no one ever sat unless we had special company. In the statue's place went Red Ryder so my father would see it everytime he descended the stairs to the living room. When Mom asked where her statue was I told her I had nearly broken it when I bumped the table. She bought my story about it being safer in the parlor. I was never inclined to tell fibs like that, but desperate times required desperate measures.

For my next trick, I carefully placed my comic book allies on top of my father's copy of the *Sporting News* so

he would have to slide them out of the way whenever he wanted to read about Allic Reynolds and the rest of his favorite Yankees. All I had to do then was replace any comic book removed from its predetermined location and wait for my psychology to take effect. It was so clever a plan that it was almost diabolical. I was so confident that my scheme would work that I went out and spent ten cents on two red tubes of BBs.

Weeks passed without a word from my parents. August was almost over and I knew it would be only a short matter of time before our annual pot-pinki trip. But despite Red Ryder and Little Beaver grinning from every conceivable vantage point, the only thing I got for my efforts was an admonishment from my parents about my comic books being scattered all over the house. At least they noticed! But I knew if I was going to ever get my gun I was going to have to push the issue. I pestered them to the point of being threatened with a few licks of my father's belt. My parents weren't going to budge. "You'll only shoot the song-birds," my mother said.

"Why, you could knock out someone's eye," my father continued. My spirits were sagging.

I was an altar boy at the time, and I remember sitting on the steps behind the church after serving mass and talking to my best friend Pinky Baldoni about my sad situation. Pinky wasn't much help, but then Father John came by and began to chat with us. "What seems to be your problem, Michael?" he asked. In those days all the adults called me Michael, I guess to differentiate between me and my father, who everyone referred to as "Big Mike." Now Father John was an outdoor man of sorts. I even had heard rumors that more than a few trout had succumbed to his hand-tied flies. After I finished my tale of woe, I thought he seemed more than a little interested. I thought nothing more of it as the days passed, though, and September 19 soon rolled around. Potpinki pickin' time was at



hand and still no gun. I was as low as a guay could get.

It was Thursday, September 17, when Dad made the big announcement. On Sunday we were going to Tunkhannock to hunt the elusive potpinkie. A fine kettle of fish I had. A giant half-bushel basket to fill, and no Daisy to fondle and gloat over during the trip. Things were not going my way.

Sunday finally came and Dad was loading the car for our excursion. "Michael," Dad called, using his "go fetch me something" tone of voice. "There's a box under the bed in my room. Get it and bring it down." I reluctantly did as I was told. What on earth could this be, I wondered as I slid the three-foot-long box out from under Dad's bed. Suddenly, I felt like I had been struck by a lightning bolt. Could it be? The box looked like it could have held my Daisy. It felt like it might have held my Daisy. What was more important was that it *sounded* like it held my Daisy. I don't remember coming down the stairs with the box, but I do remember breathlessly presenting the package to my father, with the biggest smile I ever had.

**COULD IT BE? The box looked like it could have held my Daisy. It felt like it might have held my Daisy. What was more important was that it sounded like it held my Daisy.**

"Father John stopped at the house last week," Dad said. "He said something about if a boy was hunting, you wouldn't be hunting the boy."

I had no idea what he was talking about, but I knew if he didn't hand over that package soon, I was about to risk life and limb by ripping it out of his hands.

Dad finally gave me the box and I quickly ripped the brown wrapping paper that covered my treasure. Sure enough, there it was in all its beauty. A genuine Red Ryder BB gun, complete with a leather lace on the saddle ring. I was speechless. Dad gave me the cus-

tomary lecture about not taking the gun when he wasn't with me, and Mom lectured him about how crazy it was to give an 11-year-old kid something that could be so dangerous. Dad must have won the argument because in short time we were on our way to Tunkhannock and I was in the back seat of the 1940 Plymouth, fondling my new rifle.

It's amazing how people can remember some events yet forget others. That was one day I'll never forget. As Mom and Dad went about searching the fields and woods for Potpinkie, I was busy looking for a suitable quarry on which to test my gun. Birds, I knew, were definitely out. I remember stalking my way through a cow pasture



when it suddenly hit me. There was an unlimited supply of pesky yet worthy targets. The field was abuzz with green-headed horse flies.

I reached into my shirt pocket and extracted the tube of BBs. Twisting the muzzle of my new rifle, I carefully spilled about a half-tube of the copper pellets into the magazine. I twisted shut the muzzle, sealing in an afternoon's supply of ammunition. I took great satisfaction in hearing the BBs



**HORSE FLIES** were everywhere, and after each shot, it didn't take very long for a few more to settle back down. And before the afternoon was over a whole nickle pack of BBs was buried in that cow pie.

rolling around in the magazine, steel rolling over steel—that was satisfaction! I'll never forget how a rainbow of color appeared on the surface of the receiver, brought about by the sunlight reflecting through a hefty coat of 3-in-One oil. I remember the words, "Daisy Manufacturing Co. Plymouth, Michigan," on the top of the receiver. I didn't know where Plymouth, was; in fact, I wasn't even sure where Michigan was, but I did know I was growing fonder of the place. After all, any place that could make a Daisy couldn't be all bad.

Sitting about eight feet from a fresh cow pie, I had an afternoon's worth of entertainment ahead of me. "Phhhhfft," "splat." Each BB made a definite mark in the pie. The horse flies were everywhere, and after each shot, it didn't take long for a few more to settle back down for lunch. Before the afternoon was over a whole nickel pack of Bullseye BBs was buried in that pile of cow dung.

The afternoon wore on and Mom and Dad finally called it a day. They found only enough mushrooms for Dad

to have with his eggs the next morning. I wasn't disappointed, however, because the next weekend we would be back—I could count on that. Dad wouldn't quit until he found enough potpinkie to get him through the winter. I wasn't allowed to take my gun out at any time other than in the fall, when my parents went hunting mushrooms. It didn't matter. The advent of each fall would get my blood cooking with the anticipation of going afield with gun in hand. To this day I still get the same feeling.

Today I have surrounding me a room full of guns I have acquired over the years. Guns I use to hunt deer. Guns I use to hunt woodchucks. Guns I use to hunt the wild turkey, and guns that I own simply for the pleasure of owning. As fine and as expensive as some of these firearms are, none has given me as great a pleasure of ownership as my Daisy. As I sit in my game room, surrounded by trophies of years past, I feel badly that my little Red Ryder isn't around to have been passed on to my son. The flood of 1972 took care of that. I vaguely remember seeing a mud-caked air rifle being hauled out of my parents basement, stuck in a pile of unidentifiable trash. Given the seriousness of the situation, I never gave a second thought to the possibility of salvaging the little Daisy. Maybe it's just as well. If I had given it to my son, he would have had no idea of what it meant to me. Besides, if he ever wants one, let him work for it like I did. It'll mean a whole lot more.





**BEAVER TAGGING DAY**—the first day trappers could bring in beaver pelts for tagging and measuring. The Game Commission uses the measurements to estimate the beaver's age—juvenile, yearling or adult.

# Beaver Tagging Day

By John Tomikel

**P**ICKUP TRUCKS, from out of the valleys and down from the hills, rumbled up to the Union Township Building south of Union City. It was Saturday, the first day trappers could bring in beaver pelts for tagging with the official seal of the Pennsylvania Game Commission. Without the official seal it is illegal to possess or sell a beaver pelt.

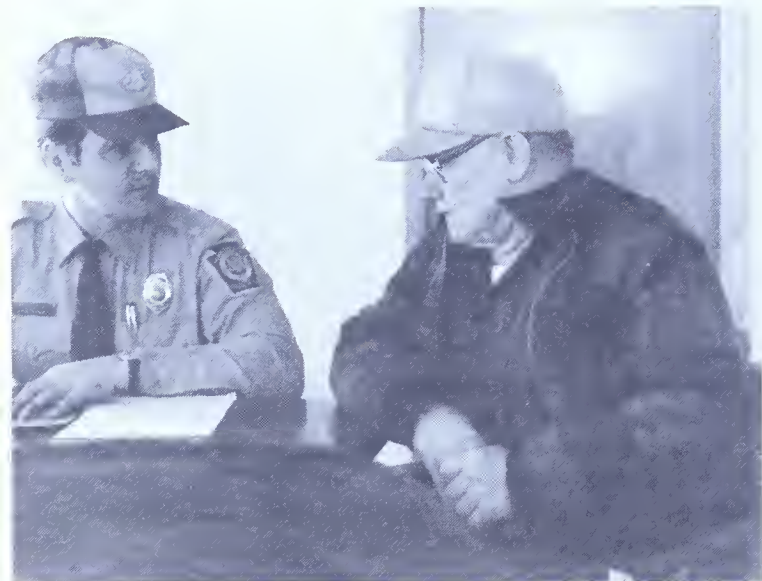
Wildlife Conservation Officer Wayne Lugaila, wearing his official uniform and official expression, recorded data about each pelt while Deputy Mike Wojtecki called out measurements and did the actual tagging.

Into the hall they came: gray-haired old-timers chewing tobacco, middle-age men in denim and twill, women in knee boots, and young boys shining like newly minted pennies. All were carrying the stiff pelts of beaver.

The air was heavy with excitement as each newcomer entered the door. A quick glance notified us whether or not the furtaker had his legal limit of six. In the first hectic hours of tagging and measuring, nobody had come in with the limit.

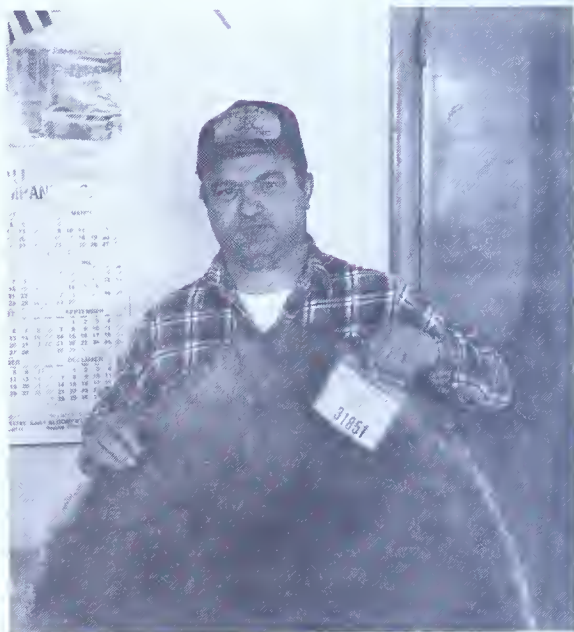
## Size of Pelts

Another statistic we were interested in was the size of the pelts. Circular pelts were recorded by measuring the diameter and multiplying it by two. For oval pelts, the length and width were measured and then added. The Game Commission uses the measurements to estimate the beaver's age—juvenile, yearling, or adult. For the first hour, 68 inches held the record, but that fell when John McQuire, Union City, came in with a 72-inch pelt. It was the only beaver he had, but



**WAYNE LUGAILA**, Erie County Wildlife Conservation Officer, recorded data about each pelt. Beaver pelts must be tagged before they may be sold or if they're going to be retained longer than ten days after the close of the season.

**JOHN McQUIRE**, right, had only one beaver, but it was a big one. Measuring 72 inches, it was bettered by none and equalled only by the one taken by **DAN SMILEY**, below, from an Erie County State Game Lands.



**WEBBED HIND FEET** enable beavers to travel and maneuver easily through the water. The split toenail second from the right, on each hind foot is used to apply oil from abdominal glands to the animal's fur.





it was a big one. John assured me he had taken more beaver, but he said he released those that seemed less than 40 pounds, "to give them a chance to grow a little."

Dan Smiley, Waterford, brought in four beaver pelts he took from an Erie County Game Lands. One of them equalled the day's record of 72 inches. What was particularly interesting was that Dan is 12 years old. Dan explained, "It was a way to be outdoors and earn extra money."

All of us—trappers, officials and onlookers—were anxiously waiting for the fur buyers, but after the first two hours, none had arrived. As the excitement mounted my hunger mounted with it. There was nothing left to do but walk across the parking lot and get something to eat.

The parking lot of Steve's Restaurant was a mass of mud caused by the warm spell that had started to melt the snow. Inside, Brenda was serving strong steaming coffee and flapjacks swimming in locally produced syrup.

Many trappers obviously had the same idea. I spotted several of them, along with their families, sitting at metal tables. I was welcomed at one surrounded by orange-coated heavy-booted men.

"Did the buyers come yet?" one asked.

"Not that I could see," I replied. "Although there was a tall thin guy getting out of a blue pickup, and he didn't have any beaver with him."

"That must be Burrows," another said.

The festive atmosphere continued while the pelts kept piling up around Wayne and Mike. They were busier than ever, recording and sealing. Andy Francisco, a local officer in the Penn-

sylvania Trappers Association, recognized the need for assistance and quickly volunteered to help.

One of the buyers did turn out to be Walter Burrows of Elgin. I knew him from past interviews. He told me that beaver pelts were going for up to \$40. Large pelts, depending on condition, brought around \$34. Small pelts were bringing about \$20 each. Walter sells his pelts at auctions held every year in New York and Canada.

Near the end of the tagging session two burly bearded brothers came in with three unskinned beaver. They explained that they lived in a trailer and didn't have the facilities for skinning and drying. One of the buyers said he would skin the beavers if they sold them to him.

The beaver carcasses were an added attraction, and everybody crowded around them. Deputy Wojtecki pointed out the webbed hind feet and one split toenail on each foot which the beaver uses to groom itself.

It was amazing to see so many youngsters engaged in trapping. When I asked a lad with a small stack of pelts where he was from his father answered, "Wattsburg."

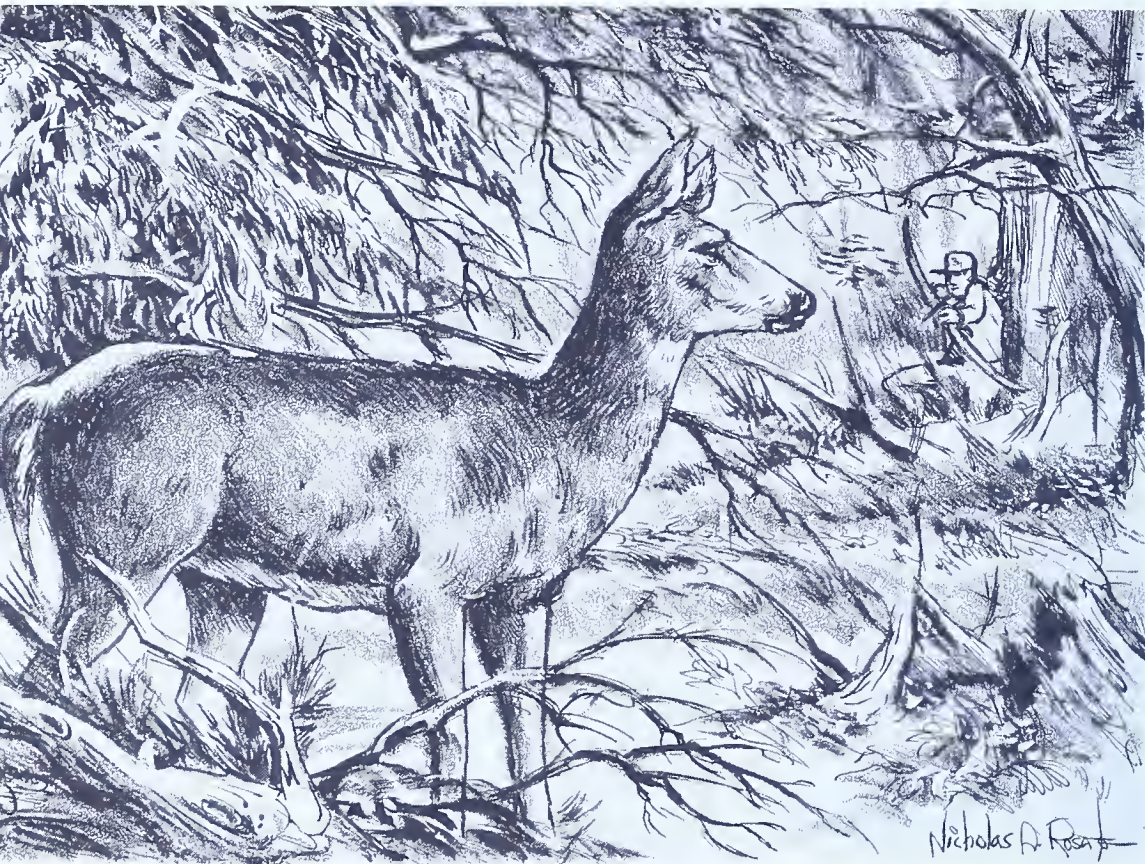
The kid looked up at dad and said, "I can answer the questions for myself." He didn't want anyone horning in on his accomplishment, and a big accomplishment it was—catching, skinning, and stretching. He got \$40 for two small skins, but he kept the larger ones.

The tagging session drew to a close. Wayne and Mike began to pick up their gear. I didn't ask for any final tabulations because tagging and sealing will go on. It was obvious from my observations that trapping beaver provides not only pleasure and excitement, but extra income to boot.

## Thoughts While Walking

*What one refuses in a minute  
No eternity will return*

— Schiller



AT 15 YARDS the big doe walked behind a large hemlock. I came to full draw and, when she stepped clear, released.

## Pennsylvania Grand Slam

By Ike Gross

IT WAS THE perfect morning, cool, crisp and clear. It had been light for almost an hour and I had been calling off and on for the past 30 minutes without so much as a peep from a gobbler that I had hoped was in the area. Suddenly, after a short series of yelps, a gobble from somewhere behind me broke the silence. I had to act fast. I scooted around to the opposite side of the big beech and yelped again. Not one, but two gobblers answered, and I could tell they were coming closer. Moments later both appeared about 70 yards out, coming at a fast walk. When they disappeared in a small depression I clucked once on the mouth call. Both answered instantly, and I was sure I wouldn't have to call again.

For me the season had begun back in October, during the second week of archery season. Although I live in Bradford County, I have part ownership in a hunting camp in Potter. My two brothers, three other friends and I always spend the second week there. We spend our mornings on stands and the afternoons putting on several small silent drives. That procedure has worked well for us. It was on one of these drives, on the last day of our hunt, that I filled my tag.

Mine was the third deer taken that week. Ken Slotter, a friend, came to camp but could hunt only one day. That's all he needed, though. He took a small buck with a heart shot. Dave Prutzman took a huge doe on Tuesday,



with an arrow that hit the deer in the neck and severed the spinal cord. She dropped stone dead in her tracks. My brother Jim had missed two does, Norman Conte had blown a shot at a real nice buck that was almost in his lap, and LeRoy Ott, who generally shoots pretty well, lost count of the bent and broken aluminum shafts he was accumulating back at camp.

By our final day only my brother Roger and I had yet to draw down on a deer, but now it was my turn. I was the middle stander, between LeRoy and Norman. Roger, David and Jim were drivers. Shortly after they started I caught movement out in front of me. Three deer were coming in my direction. All were does, but I enjoy archery season so much that I knew I'd shoot at the largest if I got the opportunity.

The deer continued on. At 15 yards the big doe walked behind a large hemlock. I came to full draw and, when she stepped clear, released. The Razorbak 5-tipped 2117 smacked the deer squarely through the ribs, just behind the shoulder. We got the group together, gave the deer a good 30 minutes, and then started after her. Her trail was easy to follow, and after a relatively short tracking job and field-dressing chores, we were dragging my doe back to camp.

Three weeks later, during the middle of the first week of the fall turkey season, I was in the woods again. I had heard that two flocks had been scattered the first day of the season on a ridge about a mile from my home. I drove to the woods that afternoon and then hiked to the top of the ridge. Turkey scratchings were everywhere. I was optimistic when I settled in against a large tree and popped the call into my mouth. It was quiet and I knew my calls would carry a great distance. Even if I couldn't get a turkey to respond, I hoped I might hear turkeys fly to the roost later in the afternoon.

I adjusted my camouflage and then sat motionless for 10 or 15 minutes to allow the woods to return to normal. Then I clucked a couple of times. A



**WHEN I slapped the trigger the copper-plated 6s brought him crashing back to earth. Seconds later the thought struck me: I had actually taken a deer, a fall turkey, a bear and a spring gobbler all in the same hunting license year.**

turkey answered right away, about a hundred yards out in front of me. After I clucked again he gobbled twice and then started into the kee-kee run of a lost young bird. I finally saw him coming at a steady pace. At about 40 yards, when his head disappeared behind a tree, I brought the shotgun to my shoulder. He paused for a second and then stepped into the open. A few minutes later I was attaching my tag to the young gobbler's leg.

### **Bear Season**

November 19 was the opening of bear season. My brother Roger had come up Sunday afternoon and we planned to hunt a State Game Lands in eastern Bradford County the following day. The remainder of Sunday was spent making sure our rifles were hitting right on the money. My Winchester Model 88 with handloads was virtually driving tacks at 100 yards. My brother's 338 Winchester Magnum was doing the same. Neither of us ever go into the woods without knowing exactly what our rifles are doing. A chance at an elusive blackie is no time

to find out your rifle doesn't hit where it's supposed to. Monday morning, well before daylight, we pulled into the parking spot and met two other friends who had chosen the same place to hunt. The four of us were going to hunt up in a large ravine where we had seen bear sign on two previous occasions.

I have an artificial leg, so after climbing about 400 yards, I decided to choose a stand and sit for several hours before moving on. Roger, Gary and John continued uphill toward the head of the valley. We planned to meet at the trucks for lunch. I'd been on stand about 45 minutes when a movement some 150 yards below caught my eye. In the next instant my heart shifted into overdrive and then leaped up into my throat. Not one, but three bears materialized, moving uphill toward me.

A million things were racing through my mind, but I knew I'd have to find an opening to shoot through. I quickly found one and then waited. They continued coming, and I readied for the shot. When the lead bear, the biggest of the three, ran into the opening, for some unbelievable reason, she stopped. I settled the crosshairs just behind the shoulder and squeezed the trigger. The 308 bullet knocked the bear flat; she never got up. I added two more shots for insurance. They weren't necessary, but black bears are pretty tough, and I wasn't about to let a once in a lifetime trophy get away.

### Understatement

To say I was excited would be an understatement. I began to shake so badly that I had to sit down to keep from falling. I just couldn't believe I'd been lucky enough to bag a Pennsylvania black bear. Sometime later, after the shakes had subsided, I put my tag on the bear's ear. It was then I realized that it was only 8 a.m. The four hours I waited for one of the guys I was hunting with to come back down through the valley was the longest four hours I've ever spent in my life. Boy, did I want to tell somebody.

Roger and John finally showed up a little before noon. Gary met us a short time later. With some pulling and prying we got the bear back to the vehicles and headed for the check station at Wheelerville. Once there we found out that my bear was an adult sow. Her dressed weight was 126 pounds; the estimated live weight was 150 pounds. She wasn't big, but I couldn't have been more proud if she'd weighed a ton.

### Closing In

Now, back to the beginning of this story. The two gobblers were closing in fast and it suddenly dawned on me that there wasn't a thing between us and that my shotgun was still resting across my knee. They closed to within 30 yards, then 20, then 15. At 13 paces I decided to make my move. I've learned from past experiences that sometimes a turkey that gets too close is just about as bad as a turkey that doesn't get quite close enough. (I called a bird in for a friend one fall, and he let it come in to less than 10 yards before he tried to shoot. The turkey, apparently spotting movement at the last instant, ducked and ran. His shot string plowed an impressive furrow on the forest floor, but failed to cut a single turkey feather, simply because he'd allowed the bird to get too close.) I could see several inches of beard sticking out through the breast feathers of this gobbler, and I knew I didn't want him any closer. I snapped the gun to my shoulder and swung on him. He started to fly, but when I slapped the trigger, the copper-plated 6s brought him crashing back to earth. I raced over and grabbed the thrashing gobbler. A few seconds later he lay still, and it was then that the thought struck me. I had actually taken a deer, a fall turkey, a bear, and now a spring gobbler all during the same hunting license year.

Now, with my fourth tag filled and firmly attached, I left the woods a very happy Pennsylvania hunter. It was a hunting season the likes of which I may never experience again. But I guarantee it won't be for lack of trying.





## *Spring Hawkwatching at Blue Mountain*

**By Kenneth Kranick**

**M**ANY PEOPLE who enjoy autumn hawk flights along Pennsylvania's Blue Mountain ask about the return migrations. Most ask how many hawks pass the lookouts in spring. Others, the more experienced birders, wonder what other birds can be seen.

For decades the consensus has been that northbound raptors generally ignore ridges and, instead, maintain a broad front pattern. After 17 seasons of logging spring flights, I agree that the movement is more diffused, but I have only weak theories as to why. If soaring birds love the easy southerly rides mountains give—from rising air currents—why don't they behave similarly in spring?

Hawks do concentrate along ridges in the spring, often in surprising numbers. Weather, it seems, determines to what extent. The whys and hows of migrations will occupy scientific jour-

nals for many years, but for now I can describe what to expect, flight patterns, and the effects of weather.

Numerous articles and a few books detail the geography of the Appalachian chain's Blue Mountain (Kitatinny Ridge, to some) and how, adhering to it by thermals or updrafts, hawks follow its east-northeast path through eastern Pennsylvania in the spring.

Baer Rocks\*, the site of my study, sits about 14 miles upridge of Hawk Mountain, on State Game Lands 217. It's 1.7 miles southwest of Bake Oven Knob and accessible from the same windy mountain road. I chose that large outcropping for its remoteness and beauty, not for any topographic advantage. Bake Oven Knob, Lehigh Furnace

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\* Also spelled Baers and Bear

# Pennsylvania Game COOKBOOK



**Pennsylvania Game Cookbook** is a 96-page collection of delicious recipes submitted by **GAME NEWS** readers. It includes methods of preparing all kinds of game available in Pennsylvania, plus some recipes for moose, elk, and other species. \$4.00 delivered from **GAME NEWS** office.

Cap, Little Gap and other areas offer equally suitable spots for spring watching.

When favorable winds prevail Hawk Mountain's topography steers many migrants too far south and east to be seen from the sanctuary's lookouts. Although the uncontested champ for fall hawk counting, Hawk Mountain is, therefore, not as popular in the spring.

Farms dominate our view south, but the picturesque landscape is quite varied. South Mountain, over 20 miles south of and parallel to Blue Mountain, sways some migrating birds from us. At South Mountain's north edge, and easily visible on clear days, Allentown and Bethlehem lie.

From late February through early

May migrations take place on nearly every day the weather's clear. Hawks leave their roosts and start drifting north as morning sun warms the earth. Under good winds—those from the south or southwest—many birds that reach the Kittatinny decide to take advantage of the energy saving lifts along its windward flank. At such times we look carefully to the southwest for airborne dots and follow any in. Hawks move higher as morning wears on, and from midday to late afternoon they test, and at times overwhelm, human eyesight. Thermal strength and winds govern altitudes. Occasionally a large fall flight remains below eye level; in spring that never happens.

A warm spell on the afternoon of March 2, 1972 enticed Floyd Wolfarth, of Blairstown, New Jersey, to watch from near Raccoon Ridge. He describes the activity: "... there were scores of birds in the sky at the height of the move. I conservatively estimate that I had at least 1000 redtails, and if an all day watch was possible at the Catfish Firetower, the totals would be far greater."

Yes, what would the tally have reached had someone watched all day? Double the best fall numbers of red-tails? Ornithologists had known of such spring flights only along the Great Lakes, and not that early. Yet the right blend of weather and winds caused hawks to ignore the rules that day.

Poor birding begins with a cold front and lasts through the high pressure trailing it. Once the high moves off the coast, allowing warm air and south winds to take control, the migration thickens. At such times hawks stick by thermals or updrafts and form narrow autumn-like lanes above the ridge. We record some moderate flights under warm air and north winds, but never one with exceptional numbers.

About the spectacle Wolfarth witnessed, a high had stalled off the Southeast coast and a warm front ushered in record heat. Early on that March 2 a cold front raced southward through New England, bringing pre-



precipitation there and lowering barometric pressure here. So the day, with temperatures past 70 and falling pressure and moderate southerly breezes, had all the elements.

Too often we miss the initial hawk pushes because a foot of ice and snow covers the mountain road. Apparently, some February days have more than just trickles of birds. At noon on February 27, 1983, Eric Wiener and Chris Hogan spotted from below the ridge a line of hawks passing overhead. They counted 32 birds in only five minutes. That date in 1977 brought a large cross country movement, pieces of which every local birder outdoors chanced seeing.

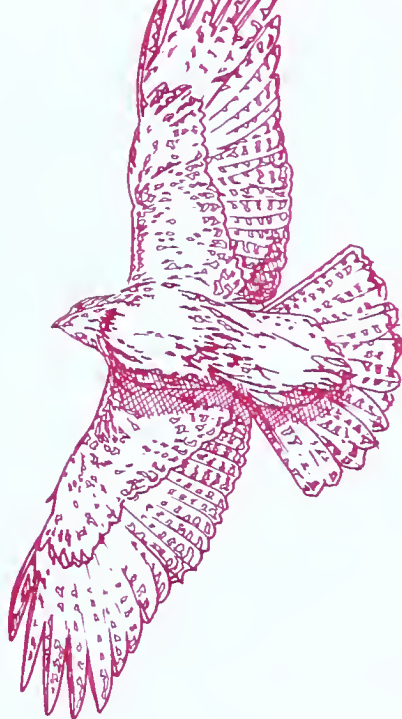
In late February redtails outnumber the sharp shins, kestrels, red shoulders and northern harriers combined. With the hawk migration not yet in full swing, we scan hard to catch the first arrivals of other birds. Thousands of crows flood early-March skies, and turkey vultures are evident, too. Since 1977, black vultures have resided here.

As March progresses, both variety and numbers of migrants improve. Again, though, birds other than raptors vie for equal attention. Ducks look more plentiful now than in November, and on at least one day ring-billed gulls fly by in numbers unequaled during an entire autumn. Those gull shows sometimes coincide with great pageants of Canada geese.

### Redtail/Red-Shouldered

Although early March holds our highest redtail counts, the species is more likely to be seen in later weeks. Red-shouldered hawks have parts in almost all early season flights, and seem to peak, numbering upward of twenty a day during the month's final ten days. Being morning and early afternoon flyers, redshoulders disappear before redtails begin their late afternoon surges.

The first ospreys and broadwings sail by as April arrives. Observers see not only increases in sharpshins, too, but also numbers of kestrels un-



**AUTUMN HAWK** watching is a popular activity. What many birders haven't realized, however, is that springtime hawk watching can be just as enjoyable and fruitful.

matched by any in fall. In each of the six outings I counted over 100 kestrels, late afternoon supplied the majority. My record of 154 kestrels and two other daily counts over 100 fell—in different years—on April 2. According to our sparse data, golden eagles, as rare as rough-legged hawks, demonstrate a slight preference for this time.

April's second half is when we see our highest numbers. If weather cooperates during any day between the 18th and 26th, we might see up to 120 sharpshins, an equal number of ospreys, 1000 broadwings, and some waterfowl too. Of those three species, ospreys get the most attention, probably because their fall flights can't compare. In far lesser numbers, northern harriers—still marsh hawks, to some—crest, as do Cooper's hawks and merlins. (We saw eight merlins in one hour on April 20, 1986.)

Although it's possible, we've yet to see the full spectrum of 14 raptor species in a single day—we haven't



#### Question

With last year's law change, may I still hunt fox on Sunday?

#### Answer

No, Sunday hunting for fox is prohibited under the new law; this also includes woodchucks and raccoons. Trapping on Sunday is still permitted.

done it in the fall, either. Hawk-watchers wishing to see every bird had better prepare for an 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. vigil, some three hours longer than the typical March watch.

Any peak in bald eagle or peregrine falcon numbers occurs late in the month or, if affected by prolonged inclement weather, as soon as the weather changes. Variables make it tough to compare spring and fall counts of peregrines and merlins, but evidence suggests spring would get the edge, providing there's an ample supply of south breezes.

Common loons deserve mention, because a tally of 200 seems rather routine. Fall observers don't see that many, and they don't get to look down at flocks or hear their ghost-like cries. Loons begin to move as hawks first stretch their wings and it's rare to see them after 10 o'clock.

#### Ospreys Most Notable

Early May brings a marked decline in migrating raptors. Any of ten species may appear, with ospreys being most notable, broadwings a close second. Unlike the previous weeks of April, there's no late afternoon action by May. Now warblers and other tiny passerines flit about, and the forest sounds busy for the first time. Thin ridgetop foliage, at least ten days from maturity, enables us to spot these small fry easily.

Because resident redtails can be flying back and forth all day, we abandon attempts at counting them. (After subtracting southbound from northbound "tails" one early May trip, I finished with minus 68.)

Several mid-May mornings contain spurts of hawks, but none large enough to motivate. The migration ends soon afterward.

Autumn hawk watching is an increasingly popular outdoor activity. What many enthusiasts don't realize, however, is that spring trips can be just as enjoyable.

### State Turkey Convention

The Pennsylvania State Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation is holding its 13th annual convention this month. It's being held at the Berkshire Sheraton Inn, Reading, on March 18, 19 and 20. Seminars, exhibits, raffles and a fine art auction (all proceeds will go to the state chapter) are just some of the activities being offered. Speakers include Dick Kirby, Rob Keck, Mike Schmidt, Paul Butski, Mark Baner and Jack Brobst. Nationally renowned Lovett E. Williams will be the banquet keynote speaker. The 9th Annual Wilson F. Moore Masters Invitational Calling Contest will be held in conjunction with the convention. For more information write Don Heckman, 14 Slate Hill Road, Camp Hill, PA 17011 or call 717-761-5925.



*I Met*

# *The Real Carl*

*On a Deer Stand*

By George L. Harting

**I**N HIS delightful diary, *Gone For The Day*, the late Ned Smith detailed the quality of Pennsylvania deer hunters he saw leaving the woods at evening one opening day. "A cross section of our society?" Ned queried, then answered his own question: "Hardly. I saw no hippies or beatnik types, nor heard a single protest song. No thug relieved me of my wallet as I waited; no young punk mugged the old man in the woods. The natural outdoor world was wondrous enough for all without the stimulant of booze, glue, or pot."

Ned's observation on sportsmen's behavior was based on one season in the northeast region of the state, but it could have been repeated ad infinitum and from every corner of the commonwealth. I am pleased to say that Carl, my gracious hunting host, would have been among the honorable army of sports people.

Not all the sportsmen's observers, however, are as complimentary as was Ned. "Devil! Devil! You kill God's creatures." Those were the sentiments scrawled across a postcard sent anonymously to one who is a clergyman by profession, an outdoor writer by avocation, and a hunter and fisherman in his recreational pursuits.

Questioned about the remarks, the recipient simply stated, "I have listened to so much criticism that I no longer become gun shy from the slander."

Long before release of the infamous film *GUNS OF AUTUMN* and the

current hysteria of animal lovers, sportsmen have been maligned. Assaults have ranged from uncouth profanity to the stilted rhetoric that describes *all* hunters as being "perverted and paranoid." Such efforts to malign and misinform prompted a 10-year old boy to believe hunters were to blame for endangered species.

An 1853 commentary on the observation of Thanksgiving Day—or the lack of it—cited places of amusement, grogshops, oyster cellars and drinking parties as culprits, then added the offenses of Thanksgiving Day hunters. "The surrounding country abounded with shooting parties, who, in the absence of game, shot at what they might . . ."

It is no secret that lawlessness can be encountered in the out-of-doors. Persons who disregard fair play, integrity and compassion do take guns in hand;



**HUNTERS FIND** more than game in the woods. They find personal relationships marking the hallmark of humanity, and adventure that reaches the acme of fulfillment when one meets the real Carl on a deer stand.

they are encountered in field and forest. If, however, a thief, for example, is encountered while hunting, let it be affirmed he was one before he invaded the out-of-doors. It was not the chase that prompted his dereliction.

It is remarkable that the most significantly satisfying human relationships are totally devastating when perverted. Sexual expression, for example, can become the drive that makes a man a savage — or, in contrast, the relationship can be for him sacramental. Religion has become the bulwark of countless communities, but when abused it has prompted persecution. Hunting has been described by some as an exercise that routinely makes a person a sadist and a bloodthirsty ogre. An education can be afforded, however, for such critics who meet, as I did, “the real Carl” on a deer stand.

### Summer Invitation

“How would you like to hunt buck in my county this fall?” Such was the summer invitation extended in ’83 and repeated for the following seasons. The fortune of the hunt, however, did not smile on me until the opening day of the ’85 season. It happened like this:

As Carl and I drove toward the deer woods for the first day’s hunt, some strategies were discussed. The locations where other hunters would be were listed and my host indicated where his morning would be spent. A prime location was suggested for me to occupy. I knew it well and was completely satisfied.

Before dawn broke over the eastern foothills we found our way to the stands of our choice. Expectations were high. Why not? The first two hours, statisticians tell us, are the most fruitful time slot of the entire two-week season.

That particular opening day characterized itself in many styles: high winds, lightning, rain, and falling temperatures mixed with shimmers of sunshine highlighted the morning hours. By mid-morning two antlerless deer had appeared near my stand but,

apart from that event, the hours dragged out rather dully. The chill of the high winds bore down and by 11 a.m. I retreated to the pickup for adjustments to my hunting togs so I could better counter the inroads of falling temperatures.

High noon found me back at my stand. It seemed almost coincidental that as I settled in for the afternoon, my hunting chum’s approach was sighted to my right. He, too, had succumbed to the frigid weather and elected to sneak hunt, hoping the exertion would warm him.

Carl’s arrival afforded time to review the morning events. My buddy had sighted two antlered deer but was unable to drop either. My tack was to show my host the camouflaged spot between fallen timbers I had occupied during the morning hours. That said, I moved over to reoccupy the seat which had served me well all morning. Carl followed and we exchanged small talk about our morning and about the bruin I had spotted there the season before. Scarcely had we exchanged the entries from our mental logs than my partner exclaimed, “Look at that buck!”

What my eyes met as I turned about was a repeat of my first exposure to deer hunting 45 years earlier. Moving in from the left at 70 yards was a trophy-size animal completely oblivious of our secluded hideaway uphill from his course. My instant reaction was to rest my rifle across a log for steady sighting only to find, by then, the deer was secluded behind wind-falls.

Patience dictated waiting for the buck to reappear, but when he did his course was directly away from us. Placing the crosshairs on that magnificent animal’s shoulder, I squeezed the trigger. The trophy collapsed and slid down the steep wooded incline. I rushed to the spot where the deer lay. My first reaction was to count the 10 distinct points his symmetrical rack featured. My mind hurtled me back to the spot in the Poconos where so many



years ago I had flunked on a trophy equal to the one that now lay motionless at my feet. In a real sense I felt I'd just had my second chance to harvest a large buck and that this time I had atoned for an earlier blunder. Admiration flowed freely for a trophy rack that now was mine. Until that moment I could only spin such a likeness in my mind as a den dream mingles with the curling smoke from the open fire.

Suddenly I became aware of Carl standing silently beside me. He shared my admiration of the deer. "That's a beauty," he said. "The best one I've taken is a 7-pointer; the antlers hang on the wall of our family room."

By now I'd regained some composure and I relived the moment of truth. I recalled that as I aimed at the deer, Carl sat motionless on the log beside me. "You didn't even put the rifle to your shoulder," I protested. "I could have missed him."

His reply was simple. "It was your stand, not mine."

A bird dog that honors the point of its companion is regarded as the product of good breeding. Similarly, let it be acknowledged that a partner who knows restraint equal to that which my buddy displayed is at the top rung of hunting ethics. Carl's self-control thrusts to the forefront Aldo Leopold's observation about sportsmen when he affirmed: "The hunter ordinarily has no gallery to applaud or disapprove his conduct. Whatever his acts, they are dictated by his own conscience rather than by a mob of onlookers."

Hunters find more than game in the woods—they share personal relationships marking the hallmark of humanity. I met the real Carl on a deer stand.

Theodore Roosevelt observed, "In hunting, the finding and killing of game is after all but a part of the whole. The free, self-reliant, adventurous life, with its rugged and stalwart democracy, the grand beauty of the scenery, the chance to study the ways and habitat of the woodland creatures—all this unites to give to the career of the wildland hunter its peculiar charm. The chase is among the best of all national pastimes; it cultivates that vigorous manliness for the lack of which in a nation or in an individual, the possession of no other quality can possibly atone."

Our former president could well have added another plus for the hunter. It consists of the unique experience of sharing the outdoors with bosom companions.

Writing with an outdoor accent has been my avocation, but in the past I have avoided addressing the subject of deer hunting. I do not regard myself to be an accomplished woodsman nor am I able to consistently pinpoint a target with my 30-06 carbine at 100 paces. I have learned, however, that a meaningful exposure to whitetails can happen without perfecting the science of forestry, consistently scoring bullseyes, or being able to interpret the devious ways of the whitetail. Adventure can reach the acme of fulfillment when one meets the real Carl on a deer stand.

### Cover Painting by Rod Arbogast

The springer spaniel is a jack-of-all-trades sort of dog. Springers are equally at home in the mountains and valleys, bottomlands and briar thickets, after grouse and doves, woodcock and pheasants. Springers are generalists, adept at flushing and retrieving just about the entire gamut of small game. At most only 20 inches high and weighing up to 50 pounds, springers make fine house pets, too. They are characterized as being intelligent and energetic, and are noted for their pleasing disposition. A springer is hardly the best quail dog and they won't trail rabbits like a veteran beagle, but for the hunter who wants a companion to make days afield more enjoyable and fruitful, a springer is hard to beat.





# *A Three-Legged Dog Named Hopalong Cassidy*

**By Jim Bashline**

**I**T WAS one of those freak accidents and Maude Bivins had no idea what to do. The screen door had slammed shut so fast there wasn't time to act. The pup simply hadn't made it totally through and its left hind foot was nearly severed. The litter was only three weeks old and just beginning to explore the confines of the back porch. Bill was going to be furious. No, Bill was going to be sad. Gracie had trouble carrying pups and this was her first and probably only litter. Bill had already announced he wouldn't breed her again. She threw only four puppies and now one of them would have to be put down. What to do? Bill wouldn't be home for three hours.

She gathered the softly whimpering pup into her hands and raced next door. After a quick explanation to the neighbor and within five minutes they were at the vet's. Maude didn't watch, she couldn't, but she was surprised at the speed with which Doc Kimmel performed the emergency amputation. They considered putting the puppy to sleep but Doc suggested he try amputation and then let Bill decide what more to do. Maude agreed. At that point she would have agreed to anything. Gracie's pups were important to Bill and to her, too. Amazing Grace was an outstanding beagle. She had won every trial she'd been entered in, and pups from her certainly had the genes to be great ones. As a rabbit finder and trailer there had never been a better beagle in Washington County.

Doc wanted to keep the puppy at his office for a time, but since the puppies were still nursing, it was decided to take him home and let Gracie nourish him. Maude arrived at the house just as Bill's pickup turned into the lane.

"What's up? Why's the puppy with

you? Oh no, what happened?" His voice lowered as he spotted the bandage.

Maude began to cry as she blurted out the story. All Bill could do was listen and nod. He wasn't angry with Maude, and within a minute they were both crying. "Well, one thing for sure, there'll be no more springs on that screen door," and he removed the spring and dropped it into the garbage can.

Bill spent most of that night staring at the ceiling and dreaming about putting the pup out of its misery. After all, who would want a three-legged beagle? Could a dog make it on three legs? Was it right to do away with it just because of a stupid accident? After all, it wasn't the dog's fault. His feelings became tangled in comparing dogs with humans and he thought of mercy killings and the legal implications. Oh nuts, it's just a dog, not a person. But wait, this is one of Gracie's pups. There won't be any more and it's the only male in the litter. What to do — what to do?

## **Out of Bill's Hands**

The decision was taken out of Bill's hands the next morning. He didn't make coffee before dashing to the porch to check on the pup. The tiny bandage which guarded the leg stub had been removed, probably chewed off by one of the other pups or Gracie herself. The stub was being carefully licked by the proud mother and the pup appeared to be surprisingly cheerful. It actually got to its feet and half limped, half hopped to Bill's feet.

"Well, little fella," Bill whispered, as he wiped the corner of his eye with the back of his hand. "I'm sure not going to get rid of you right now. You look too

tough to fade out of the picture today. Hey Maude! Come on downstairs and take a look at this pup. I thought he'd be dead but he's actually yappin' and waggin' his tail!"

As the weeks passed the puppies grew like spring onions and the three-legged one did just as well as the others. If anything, it was even more aggressive and energetic. The amputation wound healed quickly with no complications and Hopalong Cassidy (what else could they call him?) seemed to have no awareness of his handicap. If anything, the sound right leg developed more quickly and, on occasion, even the healed left stump would touch the ground without causing pain. If Bill had been concerned that Hoppy would never run a rabbit he lost all such thoughts when he announced one day, "You know, it'll be kind of neat to have the only three-legged beagle champion in Pennsylvania or maybe the world."

### Healthy Young Dog

Hoppy developed into a healthy young dog, and at seven months he was sniffing rabbit trails along with the rest of the pups and doing his best to bark "hot trail" just like his mother. But he was a little slow. He couldn't turn a corner like the rest of the pups and it soon became obvious that Hoppy was beginning to suffer from an inferiority complex. Halfway into a good chase, Hoppy seemed to lose interest and begin to look confused. Bill suspected that the dog was smart enough to know that he couldn't keep up with the pack and, therefore, stopped trying.

Bill Bivins wasn't an unkind person, far from it, but training top grade rabbit dogs was his favorite activity. His job at the metal fabricating plant provided the means to pursue it, but once home from work each day, it was into the field or the yard with his pups and Gracie. Weekends during the fall were spent hunting or field trialing. He wasn't rich—far from it—and to keep and feed a dog that couldn't cut the mustard wasn't good business. He

certainly wasn't going to cast Hoppy aside, however, after seeing him through such a tough puppyhood. But again, the question—what to do?

One night at dinner providence interceded in a most opportune way. Quite casually, but knowing exactly what she was doing, Maude announced that she had spoken with her Uncle Wylie Gustafson that morning.

"Uncle Wylie's feeling kind of lonely now that Aunt May's gone. And you know what he said Bill? He said that if you're looking for a home for Hoppy, he'd be happy to take him." Bill's eyes lit up and he laughed out loud.

"Well now, how about that? It's the best thing in the world that could happen. Wylie sure likes to hunt rabbits, and what with his age and crippled knee and all, he'd be just the right person to own Hoppy. What a perfect solution. I'm sure glad I thought of it!" They both laughed.

Wylie Gustafson had been postmaster at Beaconfield for almost as long as there had been a post office there. Folks couldn't remember when they'd not seen his face peering out at them from behind the little glass-fronted cubbyhole. He'd worked beyond retirement age until the Postal Service found a replacement. On his last day on the job, his old Dodge pickup lost its grip on a patch of ice. Wylie's knee fractured when the truck came to rest against the guardrails. Bones approaching the 70-year mark don't always heal quite right and such was the case with Wylie. He was left with a crooked knee and a slightly off-center gait. It wasn't too painful, thank goodness, it just slowed him down a bit.

Wylie never had any dogs of his own. He did most of his hunting with his nephew; and he sure loved it. Bill always had good dogs and Wylie spent as much time with them as he could. But the drive from Beaconfield was close to an hour, and after the accident, he was leery of making it too often. As the years passed he hunted mostly alone in his old orchard, just a couple hundred yards from the back porch.



Occasionally Bill would drive over with Gracie and they'd have a hunt, but since he started hunting alone he'd been hankering for a rabbit dog of his own. He thought Hoppy would suit him just fine.

Except for whelping and other rare occasions, Bill Bivins' dogs lived in dog houses just off the back porch. Hoppy was not to be treated in such an ordinary manner at Wylie's house. A plaid flannel covered doggie bed from L. L. Bean, the kind filled with cedar shavings and foam padding, was sent for. It became Hoppy's sleeping quarters, right at the foot of Wylie's bed. An adjustment period of less than 5 minutes was all it took for Hoppy to give the bed a trial run before deciding it was satisfactory.

Hoppy wasn't yet a year old when he came to live with Wylie Gustafson, but after less than two months one would have thought that the dog had lived in the little brick bungalow for a decade.

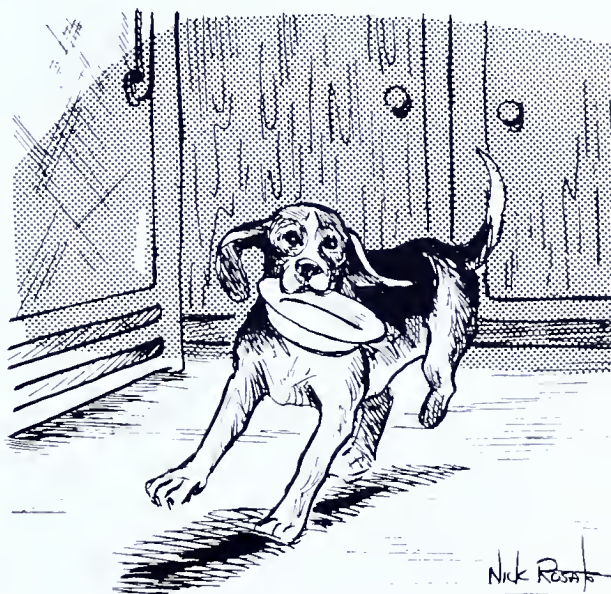
Wylie and Hopalong Cassidy got along just fine. Without other dogs running with him, that might cause a return of the inferiority problem, Hoppy handled rabbit chases precisely to Wylie's satisfaction. They were leisurely affairs, giving Wylie plenty of time to get in the right shooting position as Hoppy's three-legged gait thoroughly confused the wisest rabbits. Hoppy became so good at what he did that Bill Bivins even suggested that Wylie ought to enter him in a beagle trial. Wylie rejected the suggestion with a wink saying, "Oh, I'd never do that . . . it would be taking advantage of the competition. And besides, Hoppy thinks he's human and he just wouldn't understand why he couldn't be one of the judges."

And Hoppy was an unusual dog. As many dog owners know, a house dog

that's also a hunter picks up things that kennel dogs never do. The slightest change in voice modulation causes such dogs to "know" their master's mood. A wave of the hand, cock of the head or slump of the shoulders is interpreted instantly. A dog isn't taught these things—they just know them. And Hoppy did more than the full bag of house dog tricks. He fetched his dish when it was feeding time. He'd bring in the mail and paper from the roadside box (with the aid of a strategically placed cement block in deference to his one-wheeled "rear axle"). He'd also bark on command and chase imaginary rabbits around the kitchen table, much to the amusement of Wylie's visitors.

### Ralph Hardy

Some four years after Hoppy came to live with Wylie, a 12-year-old neighbor, Ralph Hardy, discovered combustion engines. Ralph had been one of the local boys and girls who fished each summer in Wylie's little half-acre pond. Wylie got as much fun out of having them as the kids had catching the diminutive bluegills that fairly clogged the pond. But Ralph began to cause some mild agony. May, Wylie's wife, had loved roses and the well manicured rose bed lay on the corner of their small lawn. Because May had



**HOPPY DID more than the full bag of house dog tricks. He fetched his dish at feeding time. He'd bring in the mail and paper from the roadside box. He'd also bark on command and chase imaginary rabbits around the kitchen table.**

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## GAME NEWS

For a Friend . . .

been so fond of the roses, Wylie kept the bed in perfect condition — pruning, spraying May's special mix of garlic and flour water once a week to keep the aphids down — and presented an occasional vase of buds to an ailing friend.

When May was alive he kidded her a lot about her fussing with the roses, but now it was different. The roses had come to be important to him. He ranked them right up there with Hoppy and rabbit hunting. Ralph Hardy, however, was not treating the roses so well. He had conned his parents into buying him a miniature dirt bike with all-weather treads that would go just about anywhere. On Ralph's return trips from his pal's house, which was about a mile up the road, he got in the habit of cutting the corner a bit too close, slicing deep tracks through Wylie's rose bed. Wylie wasn't one to cause a fuss, but finally he stopped the kid in front of his house one day, just after a particularly serious rut appeared, and told him that one more time and he'd have to report him to Newell Bronski. Bronski was a deputy sheriff of Washington County who lived nearby. He was the local lawman as Beaconfield didn't have a police department. Still, the rose garden incident probably would have passed without notice had not a rash of chicken killings suddenly occurred in the vicinity of Beaconfield. It was in light of this that Newell Bronski came to call on Wylie one morning in late March.

"Wylie, a complaint has been issued against you," he said quietly, clearing his throat to continue, "and your dog."

"My dog!" Wylie was stunned. "What on earth has someone said about Hoppy?"

"Well, Mrs. Gilbert just up the road

here had four chickens killed last night. As you know there was fresh snow this morning. And the Hardy kid just happened to be walking by when he saw your dog crawling under the wire runway. He told Mrs. Gilbert and she called me."

Wylie couldn't believe his ears. "That's impossible," he said with a tinge of anger, "Hoppy went out this morning to get the mail and the paper for me; you know he does that, Newell. And he was back in the house in less than three minutes. Now you tell me how my dog could kill four chickens and run a half mile each way in less than three minutes?"

"I gotta tell it like I saw it Wylie," Newell gulped, "there was a skiff of fresh snow there beside the chicken coop and there were tracks there — the tracks of a three-legged dog."

Wylie knew Hoppy was the only three-legged dog in the area, but yet he was certain Hoppy had nothing to do with the chicken killings.

"Wylie, this is the third chicken killing case in less than a week, and while Mrs. Gilbert just wants paid for the lost chickens, I'm obligated to give you a warning," Newell said in his most official voice.

"The snow hasn't quite melted yet, Newell. Do you mind going with me to Mrs. Gilbert's? I want to see those dog tracks myself."

Newell agreed and in less than five minutes Wylie was kneeling beside the chicken pen, smiling a broad grin.

"Newell, these tracks couldn't have been made by Hoppy. Look here. The dog that made these tracks has two hind legs and only one *front* leg. I've followed three-legged dog tracks for several years now and I'm an expert on it. No sir, this is a bad rap for Hoppy and me, or else . . ."

"Or else what?"

"Hoppy's been framed!"

Wylie explained his theory and how he'd take care of it, and that he was pretty sure the chicken killings would stop immediately. As Newell's county patrol car disappeared around the



bend Wylie walked across the road to the Hardy residence. Young Ralph had come home for lunch and his older sister was fixing sandwiches. As she let Wylie in the kitchen door, Ralph nearly choked on a gulp of milk.

"Sue Ann. Would you mind leaving Ralph and me alone for a few minutes? We've got some business to discuss."

Sue Ann looked puzzled but she agreed and walked into the dining room. Wylie turned to the totally shell-shocked Ralph and began:

"Now don't say anything Ralph 'til I finish. I know your uncle has had bird dogs for a long time and I'm sure you've seen him slow a young dog down by sticking one foot through the collar so it has to run three-legged for a while. I have this curious feeling that that's exactly what happened over at Mrs. Gilbert's. Somebody took a dog over there and planted some three legged tracks to make it look like Hoppy had been around. Somebody also killed those chickens. I said *somebody*, not some dog. You see Ralph, those chickens had their necks cut and a couple wings were cut off, too. The cuts were too clean to be made by a dog's teeth."

**"IT'S OUR secret, Ralph. I'll keep it if you do. Besides, you know Hoppy kind of likes you, and you are going to have a hunting license this year. You and your father just might want to come hunting with us this fall."**

Ralph's eyes were blurring from a well of suppressed tears. Wylie knew he had struck paydirt and went on:

"A *certain* young fella I know has a motor bike, and every once in a while he drives it on the public road. That's a violation, seeing as how he's not 16. Now, I wouldn't want to get a young fella into serious trouble, and I won't if he stops cutting the corner through a certain rose bed. And I won't say a word to anyone else about dead chickens. I'll pay the damages for those if a *certain* young fella agrees to do a little bit of lawn mowing for me this summer."

At that point a *certain* young fella was about to come unglued with re-

morse and downright fear of parental concern. He was scarcely able to talk and scared witless that his big sister might be eavesdropping. After several huge gulps for air he answered: "I . . . I did it! Just like you said I did. And, and, and, I'm sorry. I'm really sorry Mr. Gustafson. Will you tell anyone, I mean will my Dad . . . ?" It was all he could say. The tears flowed.

Wylie was about ready to cry, too. He felt like a tyrant but Hoppy's reputation was at stake and it had to be done. He walked to Ralph's chair and put his arm on the boy's shoulder.

"It's our secret, Ralph. I'll keep it if you do. Besides, you know Hoppy kind of likes you and you are going to have a hunting license this year. You just might want to bring your father and come hunting with us this fall. I'll have to check with Hoppy but I'm sure he'll like the idea."

A *certain* young fella gathered up all



the strength he could muster and replied, "Would you really do that after what I've done?"

"Sure would; we'll do it for certain."

Wylie Gustafson's lawn never looked better that year. In addition, the rose bed was particularly productive and it was still blooming when rabbit season rolled around. It just goes to show: it's difficult to raise roses without suffering from a few thorns.



**I'M CONVINCED.** Cottontails are well adapted to handling predators and diseases. The only way to have a good rabbit population is to provide good habitat.

## Formula For Cottontails

**By Dennis Natcher**

**I**T'S A fairly well known fact among small game hunters that the number of cottontail rabbits has been declining over the years. Many and various theories have been expressed, both in print and in conversation, putting the blame on predators, diseases and habitat loss.

While I'm sure all of those affect the cottontail to some extent, I'm convinced that the animal can survive—even thrive—with the presence of predators and diseases as long as there is good, quality habitat.

During the 1979 hunting season it was unusual for me to find even a single rabbit on my property in Cambria County. It consists of a small woodlot and old pasture fields with a few scattered groups of trees.

That year I began a project that was

to have a dramatic effect on wildlife. I decided to turn my 30 acres of idle ground into a productive area.

I began by removing all but the apple trees from the old pastures. They were left standing and pruned. The trunks and large limbs of the fallen trees were cut up and used for firewood. The tops and smaller branches and limbs were used to make many brushpiles.

Most of that work was done during the winter, and the benefits to wildlife became apparent almost immediately. Only a few days after arranging my brush piles I found deer tracks in the area. The whitetails obviously moved among the downed treetops, feeding on the tender growth at the end of each twig.

Rabbits, too, wasted no time putting



the piles to good use. A few tracks could be seen going to and from the brushpiles.

It was obvious that both the deer and the cottontails favored the apple tree branches. The tender growth was quickly consumed, and the bark of the larger branches sustained the rabbits throughout the winter. Since then I've made it a point to do all my pruning during the cold winter months. That's a good time for not only trees, but also for the animals.

My area also contained a few patches of staghorn sumac, another favorite food of the cottontail. Therefore, I cut some of those down to give the rabbits a little variety.

In the woodlot I left the better trees standing and removed the others that were competing with them. There again, the tops were used for brushpiles.

In the open areas I planted 1000 seedlings one year and another 4000 over the next few years. Japanese larch, red pine, white pine and Norway spruce are what I planted most.

Now, years later, I am satisfied with the results of my project and the transformations that occurred.

The larch and other planted trees have done well. Some tower ten feet

above my head. The old woodlot now has a maze of underbrush, ideal cover for wildlife.

There are several areas where the planted trees did not survive due to competition from other vegetation. Briars, autumn olive and multiflora rose thrive there, and I'm not complaining.

The cottontail rabbit came back in good numbers as soon as the cover began to appear, and for the past five years we have enjoyed excellent hunting. We've come to expect at least several members of our group to limit out on the first day of the season.

The rabbit is not the only animal that is benefitting from my work. Grouse, deer and foxes are frequently seen. Deer beds are numerous and trails to and from the apple trees are everywhere.

I am convinced. The only way to have a good cottontail population is to provide good habitat. The animals are well adapted to handling predators and diseases, providing they're given a chance.

If you have a few acres of idle land and enjoy wildlife, why not try to create habitat for them? I have, and the only thing I regret is that I didn't do it sooner.

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**HARRIETT and LESTER W. GELSINGER, Robesonia, were the honored recipients of the 1987 National Soil and Water Conservation Award, which is sponsored by the National Endowment for Soil and Water Conservation and the DuPont Company. The Berks County couple, who have belonged to the Game Commission's Farm-Game program since 1963, received the award during the Pennsylvania Farm Show, in recognition of the conservation practices they've implemented on their farm. "This is a family farming operation," Mr. Gelsinger told the awards committee, "so we really care about the long-term soil loss on the acres farmed."**





# FORGOTTEN LEGENDS

By Jim Youkon

*Listen hard on a quiet night, and you can hear the footsteps of a thousand legends still hunting the ridges and valleys of our great state. These legends come in all shapes and sizes. Most are commoners with unheard of names. But to a man, they have nourished our love of the outdoors, unselfishly sharing their savvy with us. This is the story of but one:*

HE CAN'T walk the ridges anymore. Perhaps the heavy sands of Normandy or Tarawa have finally taken their toll. You remember him though. He's the one clad in Woolrich and cradling his old '06 much the same as a mother with her newborn baby. He was always the last one back to the

truck, leaving you wondering how he fought the brutal cold or drenching rain. Quit wasn't in his vocabulary.

He's not much to look at now. His frame is sagging and his limp is noticeably painful, but you remember the raw strength he had the day he dragged that buck the last half-mile for you. Today, his steel-blue eyes sport glasses and water often, but you remember the times he pointed out bedded deer when you couldn't even see the hillside.

The next time you see him gently pat his beagle, with an affection only he could bestow, you'll notice how his hands have shrunk. You'll wonder how those gnarled fingers, formed from 40 years in a coal mine or steel mill, seemingly shriveled overnight.

He still doesn't talk much, but when



he does you listen. Perhaps one of the most important things he taught you was to listen, especially to the wind, for it alone tells all.

You've noticed he's not as strict as he used to be. He no longer insists you go to church or other important functions, but you never wonder why you do. You recall the early '60s, when an extra rabbit was a welcome addition to the Sunday table, the time he found out you broke the law by obtaining one. At the time you couldn't understand why he wouldn't let you hunt for the remaining two weeks of the season. That lesson you never forgot.

He's old-fashioned. He and his long-time friends don't believe in roadhunting, hunting with an ATV, or following fish trucks for that matter. They wear fluorescent orange now, because its safety value is irrefutable, but still they realize there's no substitute for safe gun handling. You remember well the day you were chewed out for breaking his rules. They don't like crowds; their idea of a gang in deer season consists of a party of three.

Our legends are simple men. They would much rather forgo turkey or ham and have a stuffed grouse on any given holiday. Their opera house is a meadow full of katydids on a cool September evening, and the only concerts they've attended were held down the hollow from their homes and featured spring peepers.

Our legends are unselfish men. They always seemed to make do with what they had while we got the warmer socks and had the newer shotguns. Think of the times they passed up shots to give us the opportunity to make a discouraging day brighter.

Proud? You bet! When you were the hunted in a far-off land dotted with rice paddies and surrounded by impenetrable jungle, he literally kept you going. He didn't understand the term "unpopular," he genuinely cared. His letters told you so. Many of us owe our very lives to the training and sixth sense they instilled while roaming a favored stretch of Pennsylvania turf. Using the



**THE SNOWY EGRET** is the seventh species in the Game Commission's Working Together for Wildlife program. The program is intended to generate support for nongame animals. This year's snowy egret patch is priced at \$3, delivered. Patches of the bluebird, bobcat, kestrel and elk are still available; those of the osprey and river otter are sold out. Decals (\$1 each) of the first six species are still available, but none of the egret is being made. Order from the Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.

great outdoors as a teaching aid, they taught us to be compassionate, trustworthy and honorable.

Our legends in this great state are legion. Most answer to: Dad, Grandpa, Uncle, or Neighbor. They ask almost nothing in return. To take them for a backwoods ride or lend them your ears on a short visit would be considered an overpayment. But we must not forget them. To do so would be sacrilegious.

We took one of our forgotten legends out for the last antlerless deer season. He couldn't make it far from the truck. But if you can understand the misty look in his eyes as we congratulated him on a nice 200-yard shot, you know why those eyes were watering. You know a legend.

*May their footsteps always rustle leaves on quiet nights. May they never be forgotten.*

## Destructive

**CAMBRIA COUNTY**—I've noticed ads of all sorts touting the power and capabilities of ATVs. If you really want to know what these vehicles will do, however, just ask a wildlife conservation officer, a farmer, or any other landowner who's had his property ravaged by them when used by irresponsible persons. These machines can do immeasurable damage to trees, trails, fields, stream banks, etc. If you know of or are witness to any such instances, please notify the proper authorities. We have too many lawbreakers ruining the reputations of legitimate users. — WCO Lawrence A. Olsavsky, Colver.



## Always Something New

**BRADFORD COUNTY**—After 20 years in this business I thought I had heard it all when it comes to animal nuisance complaints. A couple of months ago, however, I received two new ones. One lady called because rabbits were eating the artificial grass on her back porch. Later, a farmer called because several bears had destroyed his large round hay bales. They didn't eat them, they batted them around as if they were playing ball. — WCO Bill Bower, Troy.

## No Shortcuts — Practice

One aspect of hunting I try to emphasize here at Pymatuning is the ability to hit what you shoot at. It's all too common to find disappointed hunters leaving the area, knowing they had missed fairly easy shots at geese. Hunters owe it to themselves and their quarry to develop the best shooting skills possible. It's not too early to start practicing and learning what you can and can't do. Time on the range now can mean more enjoyment this fall. — LMO Keith Harbaugh, Meadville.

## Follow-Up Details

**INDIANA COUNTY**—A while back some information about deer poaching was left on my message recorder. Although I'm grateful that somebody took the time to call, I needed a few more details to make a case and the caller left no name or address. Please, believe me when I say that neither I nor any other wildlife officer will identify a witness who wishes to remain anonymous. We understand how many unnecessary problems could arise. If you have a good tip for us, leave at least a phone number where you can be contacted for further information. Our system works; just give us a chance. — Thanks. WCO A. S. Hamley, Marion Center.

## Tough Critters

**GREENE COUNTY**—While patrolling I came upon a mockingbird that apparently had impaled itself on a six-inch twig. The stick ran right through the body. I gently pulled it out and was most surprised to see the bird fly to a nearby tree. Ol' Mother Nature never ceases to amaze me. — WCO Robert P. Shaffer, Carmichaels.



## Dirty Bird

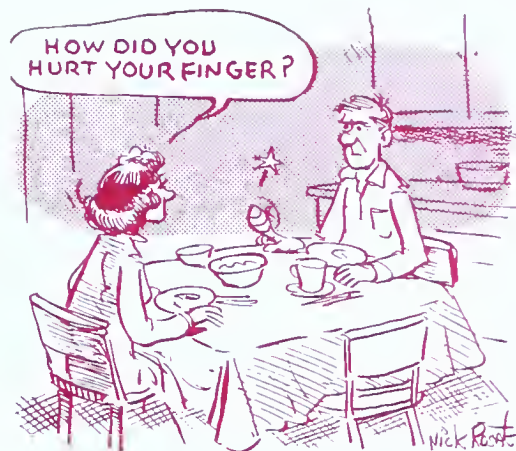
**INDIANA COUNTY**—Spouses of wildlife conservation officers put up with a lot, and mine is no exception. Along with the worries and frustrations, my wife also tolerates having assorted pieces of wildlife in and around the house. But the other day I thought even her patience had come to an end. On arriving home we scared a turkey vulture from the backyard. She didn't complain about the deer hide that had attracted the scavenger, though, she just hoped the bird would come back to finish cleaning up the mess. It didn't. Guess who did. — WCO Mel Schake. Indiana.

## Knows Better Now

**WASHINGTON COUNTY**—Fourteen years ago, on the opening day of the first small game season after Frank and Kibby, Eldersville, got married, Frank decided to go hunting. Kibby, coming from a nonhunting family, didn't know much about the sport and didn't want Frank to go. He went anyway and bagged a large cottontail and a quail. After Frank cleaned his game he decided to save freezer space by placing the quail inside the rabbit. Several days later Frank came home to a very distraught wife; Kibby couldn't understand how he could have been so cruel as to shoot a rabbit that was about to have a baby. — WCO R. Matthew Hough, Washington.

## Happens to Them, Too

**BEDFORD COUNTY**—When a person called because a bird had just flown into his window I told him, because he lived in a wooded area, that it was probably a sharp-shinned or a Cooper's hawk. When I asked him to describe it he just said it was brown with a dark tail band. When he brought it to my office, however, I looked in the bag and saw not a hawk, but a ruffed grouse. — WCO Jim Trombetto, Woodbury.



## And a Stretched Finger

**PERRY COUNTY**—With new technology come new hazards, just ask Harold Weibley. When a nice buck came within range, Harold drew back his 60-pound compound and let the arrow fly. It went about 10 yards and then stopped abruptly. The string from the game tracker Harold was using somehow had got looped around his finger. Although the deer got away, Harold was very lucky; all he got was a cut. — WCO James Brown, Loysville.

## Just Following Dad's Advice

**WAYNE COUNTY**—One of our hunter/trapper education instructors was especially proud when, during the archery season, his son dropped his first deer, a fine 6-point. Dad was proud not just for the traditional reasons, but also because his young archer was wearing a solid fluorescent orange coat and hat at the time. — WCO Donald R. Schauer, Honesdale.

## Exhausted Supplies

For years a sharecropper has been planting corn on SGL 42. Our share is 20 percent of the crop, and we usually leave that standing for wildlife. Last fall, however, a bear and her four cubs found the corn and ate our share and then some in only a couple of weeks. — LMO R. H. Muir, Kittanning.

FIRST IT WAS OUR FEET,  
NOW GUESS WHAT THEY WANT?



### Ears for Research

**DAUPHIN COUNTY**—On the opening day of small game season my deputies and I were checking hunters and asking the routine questions: Raising any birds? Seeing any rabbits?, etc. But the one question that really raised a lot of eyebrows was, “Do you have any rabbit ears you could give us?” You see, we were collecting rabbit ears for a cancer research project being conducted by Dr. John Kreider, Hershey Medical Center. — WCO Scott R. Bills, Halifax.

### It's That Time of Year

**CLEARFIELD COUNTY**—With spring just around the corner, now's the time to get nest boxes ready. It's also a good time to remember to leave young animals in the wild, where they belong. — WCO Donald L. Zimmerman, Drifting.

### Crazy

**YORK COUNTY**—Last October I saw a man jump out of his car and throw his jacket over a raccoon. He picked up the bundle, struggled with it a moment, then dropped it. With all the warnings we've given about the rabies problem, I can't imagine anybody taking such a foolish risk. I explained to the man that if the raccoon had bitten him and escaped, the least of his problems would have been a several hundred dollar medical bill. — WCO Robert L. Yeakel, Red Lion.

### Ten Days

**CLARION COUNTY**—Just a reminder: in order to possess pelts or live furbearers for more than ten days after the close of the season, a furtaker must obtain a permit from a wildlife conservation officer. — WCO James W. Egley, Knox.

### Worth Considering, For Safety's Sake

**FOREST COUNTY**—Last year's small game season got off to a horrible start. By the end of October, in just my district, two squirrel hunters and two turkey hunters had been shot. None of the victims was wearing fluorescent orange. Although we continually emphasize the importance of every hunter being sure of his target, it's obvious that some are taking the rules of safety too lightly. Perhaps fluorescent orange should be required of all hunters. — WCO Donald G. Chaybin, Brookville.

### Costly

**BRADFORD COUNTY**—Two young men took off after a landowner caught them jacklighting deer. They failed to make a turn, though, and destroyed their car. When I arrived I found one deer they had shot, but there seemed to be too much blood around for just one. I went back to the scene first thing the next morning and found two more. The two shots fired apparently passed through the one deer and hit two others. As it turned out, the boys' night out cost them \$3000 and one car. — WCO Edward N. Gallew, Wyalusing.

### 50 Times Over

**LYCOMING COUNTY**—A while back I took a trapped bear to an elementary school so I could show it to the kids and tell them a little about our bear research program. Several days later I received around 50 homemade thank-you cards from the students. Well, thank you, kids, you certainly brightened my day. — WCO Daniel E. Marks, Williamsport.



## Going Elsewhere?

**NORTHAMPTON COUNTY**—When I started this job several years ago, it was difficult to find parking places at East Bangor Dam and Lake Minisi on the opening day of waterfowl season. Last year, however, Deputy Skinner and I saw only a few cars at each location. Furthermore, the pressure on the opening of general small game season was only light to moderate. Although we annually teach about 1000 new hunters in this county, I sure can't find them when the seasons open. —WCO Richard W. Anderson, Nazareth.

## One Lucky Hooter

**CRAWFORD COUNTY**—Some folks were walking near Lincolnville when they found a barred owl hanging upside down in a tree. The owl apparently had struck at something in the tree, but missed and got its foot stuck. Once the bird was freed it remained in the tree, probably thankful to regain its bearings. —Robert W. Criswell, Saegertown.



## Never Too Old

**YORK COUNTY**—One of our hunter/trapper education instructors was surprised to find an 80-year-old woman taking the course. She had just married an avid hunter—in his 70s—and she wanted to accompany him in the field. —WCO G. C. Houghton, Emigsville.



## Same Old Bird

**LACKAWANNA COUNTY**—Rumor up here had it that we were stocking pheasants of the third kind, and several people called asking if the birds were the new Sichuan variety. One said he'd seen a cockbird run into a small brushpile, but his dogs couldn't find it, it just disappeared. Another saw three walk into his garden and then disappear. A third caller said he hunted all day without seeing a thing, but on the next day—a Sunday—he saw two ring-necks feeding right where he had hunted the day before. No, folks, we haven't discovered a disappearing variety of pheasants. They're just the same old birds up to their same old tricks. —WCO Chester P. Cinamella, Moscow.

## Beneficial

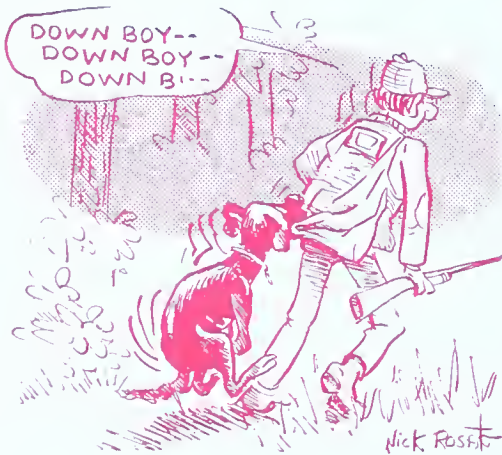
**MIFFLIN COUNTY**—With warmer weather on the way, many of us are anxious to get outside. A good activity for this time of year is planting trees and shrubs for wildlife. Those of you near the Susquehanna River might consider getting permission from a landowner to do some planting along the river or stream banks. Such plantings are especially beneficial. They provide food and cover for wildlife; they curb soil erosion and stabilize stream banks, which will go a long ways toward cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay; and they will make the landowner's property more attractive. —WCO Timothy Marks, Milroy.

### Anxious Moments

**FOREST COUNTY**—While trapping bear for research purposes I tried to avoid catching one particular bear and her four cubs. Despite my intentions, however, one of the little ones ended up in my culvert trap. When I arrived I could tell the mother wasn't very happy. Scott Jackovitz and I aimed my vehicle so we could keep Mom in the headlights while I climbed up on the trap. As soon as I lifted the door the little fellow exited at break-neck speed. I don't know who was happiest, the cub, Mom or me. — WCO Al Pedder, Marienville.

### Popular Subject

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY**—I would like to thank all the children at Rainbow World Kindergarten for behaving so well and listening so attentively while I talked to them about wildlife. — WCO William Wasserman, Montgomeryville.



### Doesn't Know the Daily Limit

**TIOGA COUNTY**—Dr. Mike Bowser, Kennedyville, got real excited when he finally knocked down a grouse and his young Labrador made a perfect retrieve. The rest of the day, however, the pup stayed by Mike's side, trying to get the bird out of Mike's coat. I guess Mike has what you call a one-bird dog. — WCO Frank Bernstein, Middlebury Center.

### Opportunistic

**GREENE COUNTY**—Deputy Ed Smith was surprised to find a flock of crows feeding in his driveway. It turned out the birds were picking at fallen hickory nuts, just as squirrels do. — WCO R. Ansell, Rogersville.

### Should've Known

**MERCER COUNTY**—When I apprehended three individuals for spotlighting deer while possessing a firearm, they tried the lame excuse about not knowing it was against the law. But they quit talking when I pointed out to them that stamped on the back of their light was the message, "Spotlighting while in possession of a firearm is illegal in most states." — WCO John McKellop, Hadley.

### Start Planning

**WESTMORELAND COUNTY**—In 1972, to honor the contributions sportsmen make to conservation and outdoor recreation, President Nixon signed a proclamation creating National Hunting and Fishing Day. Such a day has been held on the fourth Saturday of each September ever since. The East Huntingdon Sportsmen's Club, Alverton, sponsored an NHF Day last September. Festivities included wildlife carvings, gun collecting displays, merchandise exhibits, shooting demonstrations, live radio broadcasting, presentations by Game Commission, Fish Commission and State Police officers, and the official opening of the club's new walk-through hunter/trapper education course. The day was a huge success, but it didn't happen by accident. Now is the time to start preparing for this year's NHF Day. Every organized sportsmen's club in the state should sponsor one, not only to publicize the sportsman's role in wildlife conservation, but also to make more people familiar with your club. — WCO Dennis L. Neideigh, Greensburg.





**HUNTERS and trappers no longer have an, in effect, open season on raccoons, foxes and skunks in the 19 counties where the rabies outbreak was most severe. Those species are again fully protected statewide.**

## Change Regarding Diseased Wildlife

**A** FORMER list of counties in which protection had been removed from certain species due to the rabies epidemic has been replaced under the new Game and Wildlife Code with a regulation which permits landowners to destroy any sick or diseased animals.

Under the old Game Law, the Game Commission could "remove protection" from wildlife in any area or areas when a disease in wildlife, such as rabies, constituted a danger.

The new Game and Wildlife Code empowers the agency to establish procedures governing such situations, and in a new regulation recently adopted by the Game Commission, wildlife (except migratory birds, big game and threatened or endangered species) can be destroyed when it is obvious that the bird or mammal is sick or diseased and poses a threat to human safety, farm animals or pets.

Law Enforcement Bureau Director J. Richard Fagan explains that under the old Game Law, anyone could remove the wildlife, regardless of its physical condition. "That no longer is



true," he says.

"Now, the wildlife may be taken only by, or under the direct supervision of, the person in charge of the property where the threat exists. That terminates what many formerly considered to be an 'open season' on the three species involved in the rabies epidemic: raccoons, skunks and foxes. In addition, the regulation requires the wildlife to be taken in a safe, expeditious and lawful manner.

"But, even more importantly, disposition of diseased or sick wildlife has changed radically from the past. Previously, hunters or trappers could be active in an area where protection had been removed from the three species, and could market the pelts. Or, some even (illegally) trapped the animals, moved them to other areas, and then released them alive. Neither is permis-

sible," he says.

"Now, sick or diseased wildlife destroyed must be (1) buried on the site where taken, or (2) destroyed by incineration or other proper disposal, or (3) submitted for laboratory analysis. Sick or diseased wildlife destroyed under the new regulation cannot be retained alive, sold or given away," Fagan explains.

"The new regulation takes the 'market' hunter or trapper out of the picture, prevents dog training or taking raccoons and foxes in closed season, and prohibits live trapping and release in different locations," he points out.

"We recognize the real threat of rabies, but the new regulation doesn't interfere with destruction of sick or diseased wildlife. It just eliminates the 'open or unrestricted season' concept," Fagan concludes.

## Weigelt Receives Shikar-Safari Award

CLIMAXING a 31-year-career as a game protector, recently retired Wayne County Wildlife Conservation Officer Fred Weigelt was presented with the highly coveted Shikar-Safari Award. The award is given annually, in each of the 50 states, to an officer selected by his agency as having made significant contributions in wildlife conservation and law enforcement.

A graduate of the 8th Class of officers to attend the Ross Leffler School of Conservation, Weigelt earned a reputation not only by carrying out Game Commission duties, but also by using his initiative to further promote wildlife conservation and law enforcement, and to enhance the image of wildlife conservation officers.

Fred was particularly adept at trapping. He devoted countless hours to Pennsylvania's wild turkey trap and transfer program, which is the primary reason turkeys are so abundant and widespread here today. He put those same skills to good use in handling nuisance animal complaints, thereby upholding the Game Commission's public



Fred G. Weigelt

image. In a broader sense, several times Fred was called upon to explain and defend trapping for television programs. His performance in that regard was outstanding.



# 1988 Middle Creek Wildlife Lectures

Again this year the Pennsylvania Game Commission is offering a series of wildlife lectures at the Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area Visitors Center near Kleinfeltersville. These will be one to 1½-hour programs with appropriate visual aids, followed by question-answer periods. There is no admittance charge. Each lecture will begin at 7:30 p.m., on the following dates, with the subjects and speakers listed below:

April 6, 7—*North American Wild Turkeys*, Gerald Wunz, Wildlife Biologist, Game Commission; April 20, 21—*Pennsylvania's Black Bear*, Gary Alt, Wildlife Biologist, Game Commission; May 4, 5—*Volunteers for Wildlife (Some Things You Can Do To Help Wildlife)*, Jerry Hassinger, Wildlife Biologist; May 18, 19—*The Middle Creek Story*, Charles Strouphar, Mid-

dle Creek Manager, Game Commission; June 1, 2—*Bringing Back Pennsylvania's Osprey*, Dr. Larry Rymon, Professor of Biology, East Stroudsburg University; June 15, 16—*Edible Wild Plants*, Kermit Henning, Educator and Outdoor Writer; July 6, 7—*An Artist's View of Nature*, Bob Sopchick, Wildlife Artist; July 20, 21—*Bats: Myth and Reality*, John Dunn, Wildlife Biologist, Game Commission; August 3, 4—*Waterfowl and Ducks Unlimited*, Lancaster Chapter of Ducks Unlimited; August 17, 18—*Furbearers of Pennsylvania*, Arnold Hayden, Wildlife Biologist, Game Commission; September 7, 8—*The World of Thornapples*, Chuck Fergus, Writer and GAME NEWS columnist (book signing session will follow program); September 21, 22—*Pennsylvania's Deer Management: Past, Present and Future*, Bill Palmer, Wildlife Biologist, Game Commission.

## Proposed 1988-89 Seasons and Bag Limits

THE FOLLOWING 1988-89 seasons and bag limits were proposed at the January meeting of the Pennsylvania Game Commission: archery deer season, October 1 through 28; grouse and squirrels, October 15 through November 26; other small game, October 29 through November 26; bear, November 21 through 23 (the three-bear party limit has been discontinued); antlered deer, November 28 through December 10; antlerless deer, December 12 through 14; late archery-muzzleloader, December 26 through January 7; winter small game, December 26 through January 21 (except pheasants in northern counties and grouse in the 12 counties traditionally closed during the late season end January 7). Changes in the fall turkey season are noted: only a two-week season in Management Area 5; only one week in Erie County east of I-79 and south of I-90; and that part of Butler County in Management Area 2 will be closed in 1988. Again, these seasons and bag limits are tentative; actual seasons and bag limits will be formally adopted by the Commission in April.

# Game Commission Publications & Items

| Quantity | Books   | Price    |
|----------|---|----------|
| _____    | BIRDS OF PENNSYLVANIA, by James & Lillian Wakeley . . . . .   | \$ 10.00 |
| _____    | THE WINGLESS CROW, by Charles Fergus . . . . .                | \$ 10.00 |
| _____    | MAMMALS OF PENNSYLVANIA, by J. Kenneth Douth, et al . . . . . | \$ 4.00  |
| _____    | GONE FOR THE DAY, by Ned Smith . . . . .                      | \$ 4.00  |
| _____    | PENNSYLVANIA WILD GAME COOKBOOK . . . . .                     | \$ 4.00  |
| _____    | DUCKS AT A DISTANCE . . . . .                                 | \$ 1.00  |
| _____    | WOODLANDS AND WILDLIFE . . . . .                              | \$ 2.00  |
| _____    | PENNSYLVANIA TRAPPING MANUAL, by Paul Failor . . . . .        | \$ 3.00  |

## Working Together for Wildlife Collectibles

|       |   |          |
|-------|---|----------|
| _____ | 1988 ART PRINT "Snowy Egret" . . . . .          | \$125.00 |
| _____ | 1987 ART PRINT "Autumn Challenge" . . . . .     | \$125.00 |
| _____ | 1986 ART PRINT "Country Lane Kestrel" . . . . . | \$125.00 |
| _____ | 1988 SNOWY EGRET PATCH . . . . .                | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1987 ELK PATCH . . . . .                        | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1987 ELK DECAL . . . . .                        | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1986 KESTREL PATCH . . . . .                    | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1986 KESTREL DECAL . . . . .                    | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1985 BOBCAT PATCH . . . . .                     | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1985 BOBCAT DECAL . . . . .                     | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1984 BLUEBIRD PATCH . . . . .                   | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1984 BLUEBIRD DECAL . . . . .                   | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1983 OTTER DECAL . . . . .                      | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1982 OSPREY DECAL . . . . .                     | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1981 FLYING SQUIRREL PATCH . . . . .            | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1981 FLYING SQUIRREL DECAL . . . . .            | \$ 1.00  |

## Wildlife Management Areas

|       |  |         |
|-------|--|---------|
| _____ | PYMATUNING WATERFOWL PATCH . . . . .   | \$ 2.00 |
| _____ | PYMATUNING WATERFOWL DECAL . . . . .   | \$ 1.00 |
| _____ | MIDDLE CREEK WATERFOWL PATCH . . . . . | \$ 2.00 |
| _____ | MIDDLE CREEK WATERFOWL DECAL . . . . . | \$ 1.00 |

## Pennsylvania Bird and Mammal Charts

|       |   |         |
|-------|---|---------|
| _____ | Set 1 (4 charts) 20" x 30" . . . . .                                    | \$ 4.00 |
| _____ | Set 2 (4 charts) 20" x 30" . . . . .                                    | \$ 4.00 |
| _____ | Set 3 (8 charts) 11" x 14" . . . . .                                    | \$ 4.00 |
| _____ | GAME NEWS Cover Prints (4 by Ned Smith) 11" x 14" . . . . .             | \$ 4.00 |
| _____ | State Symbols Chart 20" x 30" (Deer, Grouse, Hemlock, Laurel) . . . . . | \$ 2.00 |

## SPORT Items

|       |   |         |
|-------|---|---------|
| _____ | Bronze SPORT Tie-Tac/Lapel Pin . . . . .  | \$ 3.50 |
| _____ | SPORT License Plate . . . . .             | \$ 4.00 |
| _____ | SPORT Patch . . . . .                     | \$ 1.00 |
| _____ | SPORT Hat (Adult or Youth Size) . . . . . | \$ 4.00 |

## GAME NEWS

|       |  |         |
|-------|--|---------|
| _____ | GAME NEWS Binder (Holds 12 Issues) . . . . . | \$ 5.00 |
|-------|--|---------|

## Waterfowl Management Stamps (Voluntary)

|       |  |         |
|-------|--|---------|
| _____ | 1988 Waterfowl Management Duck Stamp . . . . . | \$ 5.50 |
| _____ | 1987 Waterfowl Management Duck Stamp . . . . . | \$ 5.50 |
| _____ | 1986 Waterfowl Management Duck Stamp . . . . . | \$ 5.50 |

Mail orders along with remittance to Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797. Checks should be made payable to Pennsylvania Game Commission.

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# Tabulating Turkeys

By Dale Sheffer

Director, Bureau of Wildlife Management

SINCE 1953 wildlife conservation officers have been recording the number of turkey broods they see during the course of their daily summertime activities. Over the past 25 years these counts have proven to be reliable indicators of population trends, and they've been the primary basis upon which we determine if, where, and for how long to extend fall turkey seasons. Furthermore, since 1981, when we implemented turkey management areas, we've found that the brood counts have correlated closely with subsequent harvests.

The 1987 counts were by far the highest ever recorded (Table 1). The most dramatic increases were in Area 1, where there has been no fall turkey hunting for years, and Areas 2 and 7, where seasons have been relatively short. Those restrictions apparently have allowed turkey populations to increase substantially. It's because of those high counts, for example, that

last year's turkey season was extended by one week in Areas 2 and 7.

The turkey brood counts have proven to be so useful that our wildlife officers have begun keeping track of ruffed grouse broods, too. Although it will be several years before we have accumulated enough data to make reliable decisions, we have every reason to believe the technique will prove to be as valuable for monitoring grouse as it has for turkeys.

Modern technology is enabling wildlife managers to employ techniques that couldn't be even imagined a short time ago. But, as has always been the case, good information is vital to good management decisions. And, according to what we've found using turkey brood counts, our field force of 135 wildlife conservation officers represents one of the best sources of the good fundamental information we need for managing Pennsylvania's wildlife today.

**TABLE 1**  
**Composite Turkey Poult and Hen Counts by**  
**Wildlife Conservation Officers.**

| YEAR   | MANAGEMENT AREAS |      |      |     |     |      |      |     |      | Total |
|--|------------------|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|-----|------|-------|
|  | 1                | 2    | 3    | 4   | 5   | 6    | 7    | 8   | 9    |       |
| 1981-85  |                  |      |      |     |     |      |      |     |      |       |
| 5-year average   | 156              | 332  | 1220 | 793 | 777 | 573  | 1287 | 222 | 82   | 5442  |
| 1986   | 530              | 381  | 1430 | 707 | 519 | 852  | 1096 | 398 | 52   | 5965  |
| 1987   | 913              | 953  | 1368 | 846 | 320 | 1052 | 2466 | 342 | 125  | 8385  |
| percent change from<br>1986 to 1987                        | +72              | +150 | -4   | +20 | -38 | +24  | +125 | -14 | +140 | +41   |
| percent difference<br>between 1981-'85<br>average and 1987 | +485             | +187 | +12  | +7  | -59 | +84  | +92  | +54 | +52  | +54   |

# Riddle of the Whitetail

SOMETHING about wildness equates with mystery. An air of unknown has always surrounded wild-life. This is a large part of what makes it wild and continues to invite our interest. In the conceited way of humankind, we sometimes believe we know all about a wild animal, and then it manages to confound us. I'm sure this is true of wild turkeys and wild geese, bears, squirrels, minks and foxes, but what I have investigated most in my hunting career is the riddle of the whitetail. Last year the chief mystery in my area was the case of the 23 disappearing bucks.

Deep down inside, before the season begins, every hunter believes that he has deer figured out. This annual revelation is the result of the mistakes and successes of last year's hunting season and the seasons before. It's augmented by investigation during the off months, a time of deer scouting and watching, research and reading and, in the guise of swapping hunting tales, getting first-hand information out of other whitetail enthusiasts. So it was with me before last bow season.

I heard through the hunter grapevine that a bunch of bucks could be seen each evening feeding in a certain grassy field. There was an unusual amount of excitement about these deer, not all due to the fact that bow season was less than a month away. The next day, before dark, the bucks were there on schedule for me and my spotting scope. The group was even more im-

pressive than I'd expected—13 bucks, no does, spikes or Y's among them. All wore good racks, 6's, 8's and better. One magnificent animal was crowned by 11 points and a two-foot spread.

As if that gathering wasn't enough for the day, a spike crossed the road in front of my car as I drove through the woods below the buck field. At the bottom of the hill, two racked bucks were sparring in the middle of the path, with another on the roadside. Driving back up the hill and turning away from the first field, I encountered another deer-filled field within half a mile. Here were several does and six bucks, these also respectably antlered. Total buck count for the immediate locale, 23 confirmed.

Behind both fields was a mountain-side that had been timbered several years ago and was now intriguingly impenetrable. All of my hunting crowd agreed that the bucks had to be loafing there. In the tangle were patches of larger trees and openings just right for an archer to wait in ambush along hoof-muddied trails. The setup was ideal, success nearly certain. Those of us who planned to hunt below the fields were sure we'd tag some nice bucks. There were plenty to go around.

But in bow season, not one of the bucks was taken. Few of the 23 known to be in the area were seen. I saw one 5-point out of range and an 8-point that popped out on the trail in front of me after quitting time. That was all. What happened to those droves of deer? Where were they disappearing to during hunting hours? And a more nagging question, why were so many bucks together anyway?

Even with the unprecedented amount of information on deer behavior available to hunters today, white-tails continue to amaze and exasperate. I listened to many theories at the season's end to answer the riddle of the disappearing bucks, all or none of

## Another View...

by Linda Steiner



**IN ALL** mysteries, it's the untangling of clues, the revealing of information leading to the next part of the puzzle, that is most enjoyable. The solution is always a little disappointing.

which might have been true. But beneath the hunters' chagrin I noticed something else—pride in the fact that the bucks had befuddled them. There was respect and regard for the mystery the deer had posed. Though the hunters wished they'd scored, they enjoyed the enigma.

Gaining knowledge about deer, or any animal, is two-sided. Interest in the animal makes a hunter want to know more about it. On the other hand, each new fact tears away a little of the veil that makes the animal wild and therefore interesting. Can we ever know too much? Can we dispel the last secret, distilling a deer down to just facts and figures and predictable actions? I hope not and I believe not. The secrets of wild animals are, luckily, too deeply hidden and too numerous to ever be completely discovered. They're like an unending set of nested boxes. Open one and you'll always find another, ready to be untied.

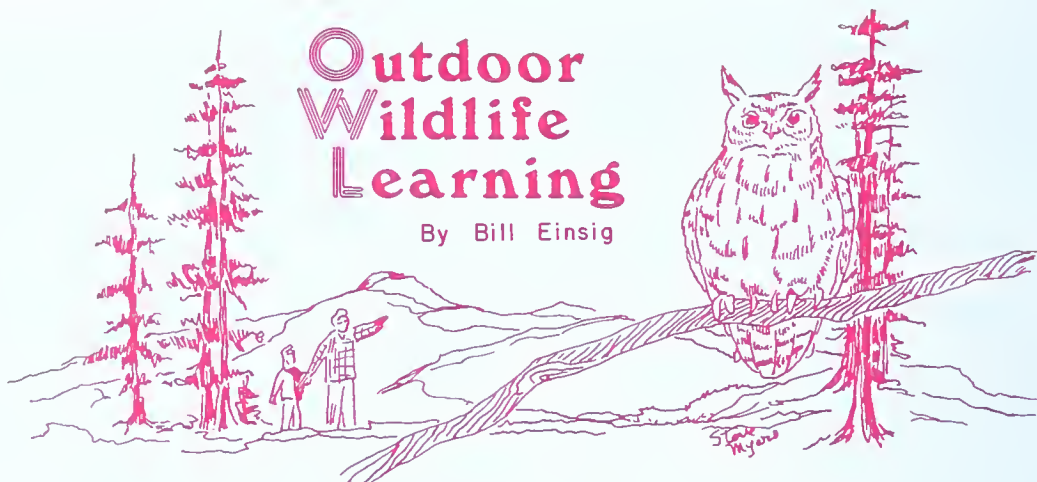
Take the rut, for instance. With so many states' archery and/or gun seasons overlapping this important time, much of the new information for hunters has centered on deer mating activity. Today's hunters know many times more about a deer's rutting behavior than those of 10 or 20 years ago. When I started to hunt, I was told to always watch behind the does for a buck, but never told why. It was sometimes assumed the bucks lagged behind because they had the safety of a scouting party going ahead, and it was even hinted they were cowardly, letting the ladies go first into danger. In light of today's knowledge about the rut, it's obvious the bucks were following for an alternate reason. Similarly, in my early days I saw scrapes, but never dreamed these spots of churned-up earth had anything to do with deer. Yet learning about scrapes has only opened



another lid to continuing mysteries inside.

Several years ago I hunted scrapes almost exclusively in the bow season. I didn't fill my tag, but what I saw surprised me about the role of scrapes as focal points for wildlife activity. I watched a button buck shadow-boxing and rubbing trees there, saw does sparring with their forefeet, observed the bigger buck making the scrape and tearing up bushes nearby, even watched a red fox depositing scent at the site. I learned a lot, but what I witnessed produced new more profound questions.

In all mysteries, it's the untangling of clues, the revealing of information leading on to the next part of the puzzle, that is most enjoyable. The solution is always a little disappointing because it means a finish. It's this unraveling of the thread of the unknown, unwrapping the secrets of wildness, that a hunter is doing when he says he's getting to know more about the animal he's hunting. What he never does say, or perhaps hasn't admitted to himself, is that he hopes he never gets to the end of the line.



## Keystone Squirrels

**R**AIDING the bird feeder, scolding the family dog or scampering up a tree to escape the kids, the common gray squirrel is a well known neighbor in many communities. It is sometimes a troublesome pest who digs too many holes in the lawn or tears into unprotected bags of trash. On balance, however, this energetic visitor brings more pleasure than trouble.

The gray is, however, not the only squirrel found in Pennsylvania. This family of rodents is both common and familiar, but some members live in obscurity, making them difficult to study in the wild due to their wary, elusive behaviors.

Test your knowledge of Keystone squirrels with this short quiz. After you complete all the questions, check yourself with the answers that follow. Good Luck!

1. How many species of squirrels live in Pennsylvania? What are they?

2. This little ground squirrel lives much of the year in rambling underground burrows. It probably is not a true hibernator, because it stores caches of winter food and is often seen scurrying in and out of snowbank tunnels on mild winter days. Its most distinctive markings are the five stripes on its sides.

3. This colonial ground squirrel relishes the addition of meat to its diet of seeds, roots, berries and fruits. As much as 50 percent of its diet consists of animal flesh such as grasshoppers, ants, beetles, caterpillars and all sorts of insect eggs and larvae. It also will eat carrion and even small rodents, such as deer mice, when it manages to capture them. A true

hibernator, it sleeps through the colder half of the year and even stays underground on overcast summer days—a real sun lover!

4. The largest of our tree squirrels is rusty red with a yellow-brown belly. It's only an average climber and spends much time on the floor of open woodlots and along forest edges.

5. This agile acrobat became rare during the logging boom of the latter half of the 19th century. It prefers the mast producing hardwood forests, is mostly gray with a white belly, but often sports some rusty red hair. A black phase occurs in many northern counties.

6. Also known as the chickaree or pine squirrel, this small busybody is our only squirrel that sports tufted ears, albeit only in its winter pelage. It's a tree squirrel but spends most of its time on the ground and occasionally even digs tunnels.

7. At a length of two feet and a weight of ten pounds, this ground squirrel is the giant cousin of the group. The french trappers called it "siffleur"—the whistler. Native Americans called it "monax"—the digger.

8. This tiny nocturnal squirrel has rich velvety fur and large black eyes. It is grayish above with a white belly and has a curious flap of skin extending from the wrist along each side of the back leg.

9. Which squirrels can be considered game animals? Are any unprotected?



## ANSWERS

1. Eight species of squirrels are found in Pennsylvania. Five of these probably appear on your list: gray, red, fox, flying squirrels and the chipmunk. The remaining three are a bit tricky.

The woodchuck is our largest squirrel. Most of us don't normally think of them as close relatives of the graceful tree squirrels, but they are.

There are also two species of flying squirrels. You may have counted just one.

Our least known squirrel is an import brought to Pennsylvania about seventy years ago. The 13-lined ground squirrel lives in only a couple northwestern counties of our state.

2. The chipmunk spends most of the winter in its snug burrow and it escapes the heat of midsummer in the same retreat. They appear to be most active during the spring and early summer and then again in autumn. Careful observers, curious about the capacity of those amazing cheek pouches, have actually counted the number of food items chipmunks have stowed away at various sittings. They include 31 kernels of corn, 13 prune pits or 7 acorns. Not bad for an animal only six inches long.

3. The habits of the 13-lined ground squirrel are unusual compared to other native squirrels. It apparently does not drink, but manages to obtain needed water from the food it eats. It has also acquired the name of "federation" squirrel, thanks to the pattern of "stars" (white spots, actually) on the 13 stripes over its back.

4. The fox squirrel is most common in our western counties, but it's been introduced throughout the state. Like the gray squirrel, the fox squirrel hides much of its food in many small holes rather than in a large cache or two like the red squirrel and chipmunk do. Both memory and scent appear to play a role in relocating the buried food. Memory may get the squirrel to the general area; scent helps to pinpoint the location.

5. The familiar gray squirrel lives throughout the state. Skulls of the gray are distinguished from those of fox squirrels by a

pair of small, peg-like premolar teeth on the upper jaw.

6. The red squirrel's favorite food is the green cones of the white pine, but, like most squirrels, it will eat a variety of wild foods, from fungi and fruits to bird eggs and nestlings. It stores winter foods in one or more large food caches. In areas where cones are abundant, this active little squirrel piles large middens several feet deep and 20 to 30 feet in diameter. Smaller, concealed caches often surround the central, exposed midden.

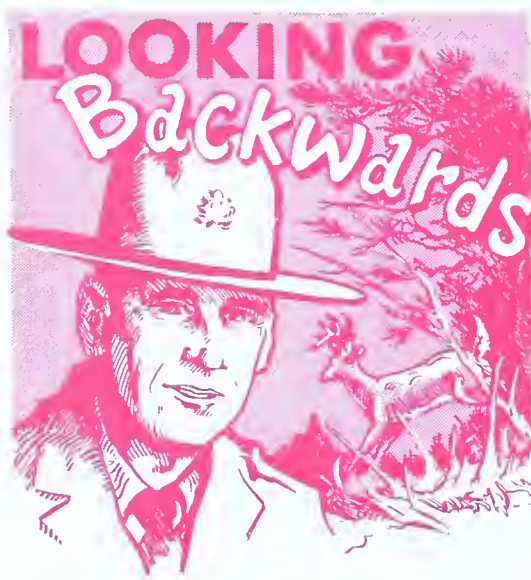
7. The grizzled woodchuck is our most familiar hibernator and the oddball of the squirrel family. The only food it stores is in a layer of body fat that is slowly consumed during its winter sleep. Weight losses of 40 percent are not uncommon for a hibernating groundhog.

Woodchucks are essentially ground dwellers but they can, and often do, climb trees. You won't often find them hanging on the tips of branches, munching on juicy crabapples, though. They climb only a few feet from the ground and then primarily for protection when cut off from the safety of their burrow.

8. Not only are the flying squirrels our only nocturnal squirrels, they are also the only ones that come close to flying. A flight is actually a downward glide from a high perch to a lower one, perhaps as much as 50 yards away. Secretive and retiring, flying squirrels are more common than usually thought and they're found in wooded areas throughout the state.

Of the two species in Pennsylvania, the northern is larger and heavier, and is more likely to be found in the northern tier counties and at the higher elevations of the Allegheny Mountains. The southern species has a much broader range throughout the remainder of the state.

9. Woodchucks, fox squirrels and gray squirrels are classified as game animals and can be harvested during regulated seasons. The smaller species are not hunted but—like all wild birds and mammals—are now protected by the new game law.



**By Bill Bower**  
**Wildlife Conservation Officer**  
**Bradford County**

*Wildlife law enforcement is difficult,  
time consuming, sometimes frustrating—  
but always interesting*

**L**AST MONTH I told you how, after receiving information, making an investigation, and waiting patiently for over one year, I was able to make an arrest that resulted in \$1600 in fines and the forfeiture of two Browning shotguns. This month's column is going to deal with law enforcement, too, and it might give you the idea that law enforcement is easy. It's not, really, but these following stories may make it seem so.

My first year on the job began in the spring of 1969. Back then we had to send a memo to the division office if we wanted to leave our districts. I got permission from my immediate supervisor, N. J. Molski, who was the Northeast Division Supervisor. I had permission to leave from Friday night at 5 p.m. until midnight on Sunday. In my absence, DGP Rockwell was to handle my calls. (Old time officers will remember this. You new guys are probably laughing!)

Dean called me the first thing Monday morning after my return. He told me he had gone to pick up a roadkill and discovered it had been shot. We made plans to meet and conduct an investigation.

Dean grew up in Bradford County and knows a lot of people. In fact, one of his old school teachers lived just up the road from where the deer was found. We paid her a visit to see if maybe she had seen or heard something. The lady remembered Dean and, after reminiscing a little, he got around to asking her about the deer. She hadn't heard or seen anything; as a matter of fact, she didn't even know the deer was there. Getting back in the car, I asked Dean who lived in the next house down the road. Dean didn't know, but I decided we might as well stop anyway. We pulled in the driveway and, while getting out of the car, I could see someone peering out between the curtains in a window. "At least someone's home," I remarked. We knocked at the door but did not get an answer. When we knocked again, this time louder, a man in his mid 20s opened the door. I introduced Dean and then myself, and told him we were Game Protectors—a fact he could easily see because we were in uniforms and drove a marked Game Commission vehicle. Being new to the business, I didn't know exactly what to say, and I guess I was quite brief. After the introductions, I said, "We're here about the deer."

Just as I paused the man said, "Yeah, come on in. It's down in the cellar." He took us right to the cellar and showed us a deer he had shot over the weekend. Boy, was I smelling like a rose! There's nothing to this interrogation stuff, I thought. (An idea I found out later to be far from the truth.) We tried to get him for the deer along the road as well, but the bullet had passed through that one, so there was no way we could connect him to it. We cut the deer down, made arrangements for the man to pay the fine and left.

Several years later, a farmer called one night to report seeing lights in his upper field and hearing several shots. He had gone to investigate but all he found was an abandoned vehicle. I contacted Deputy Jerry Ross and we went to search the area. We found a buck that had just been killed with a 22. It was lying in the middle of a field, just over a knoll and out of sight from the abandoned vehicle. We then went and checked the vehicle. It was quite apparent the vehicle had something to do with the dead deer. A spotlight was hooked directly to the battery, with wires running out through the hood and then inside the vehicle. Apparently, the wires



got pinched together and drained the battery. The car could go no farther.

Deputy Ross and I decided to wait until someone returned to the vehicle. We waited and waited and waited, but nobody came. "Well," I said to Ross, "we have the vehicle number. Let's run and get some breakfast." (My stomach has a way of setting my priorities). Well, we left, making a big mistake, one I might not make now after 20 years on the job. We contacted my old buddy Dean Rockwell for assistance and then went to Jerry's home where his wife Elsie fixed us a big breakfast. We then met Dean at the scene. Yep, the car was still there.

Our plan was for Jerry and Dean to try and contact the owner of the car while I watched the vehicle. I took up a position in a diversion ditch, not far from the car. Well, five minutes after Dean and Jerry left, while I was sitting in the ditch just enjoying the morning, I heard a car coming. Sure enough, a new vehicle stopped. I watched two men get out, open the hood of the old car, and start to rewire the battery. Stakeouts are usually boring, filled with long, monotonous hours of waiting until something happens. When it does, I don't mind telling you, I get excited. My heart picks up, something like buck fever.

Anyway, I got up and walked out to the car. The two men were too busy to see or hear me coming. I was standing beside them before they noticed me. They certainly were surprised. I was in uniform, but I introduced myself and asked if they were having a problem. They said they were fixing a dead battery. I then asked the usual questions: Whose car?, Who was driving?, etc. I then asked if they had any guns, and they said no. I next asked if they would open the trunk. Sure, they said.

By their cooperative actions I was beginning to think they had taken the gun with them the previous night, but upon opening the trunk, there laid a loaded 22 rifle and a spotlight with burned wires. When I asked whose gun it was one man said it was his, and when I reminded them that they had said they didn't have any guns they said they had forgotten about it. I then asked about the dead deer. They knew nothing about it. I went on to explain that the deer still had the bullet in it and that it would be easy to check if the rifle had been used to kill the deer. Well, they then told me they had shot the deer, but that they didn't think they hit it because it ran. When they tried to keep the light on it

they pulled on it too hard and that's what caused the short.

I called Dean and Jerry back and found they had just talked to a man who had given three guys a ride the previous night, after their car broke down. The two men reluctantly gave me the other man's name. We went to see him and he admitted to his part.

Well, had the light not malfunctioned, those guys would probably have gotten away, but so it was. I came away grinning!

I had another incident similar to that one, except in that case the violators ran out of gas. After arresting them I had to go get them fuel.

My favorite story of all I would probably entitle "Ghost Busters." After patrolling the first morning of archery season I came home for lunch and was planning to contact farmers in my Safety Zone program in the afternoon. My daughter Holly was home, and she was bored and wanted something to do. She was 13 at the time, so I suggested she come along with me and fill out the Safety Zone agreements and other paper work while I drove from farm to farm. Well, she did. Things went well until about 4 o'clock. I told Holly I was going to drop her off at home and then go back out to check archery hunters. (Most archers hunt the early morning hours and then the last few hours of the day.)

On the way home we passed an old house that had been vacant for a long time. "There's a haunted house," Holly exclaimed.

"What do you mean, haunted house?" I replied.

"All the kids in school say that house is haunted," she said.

Well, Holly wanted to stop and peak inside. I was in a hurry to get her home. As many of you parents can understand, I turned around and headed back so she could get her quick look. We were out of the car and half way up the driveway when Holly noticed a car parked out back, out of sight from the road. Then, just as we were about to step up on the porch, I heard somebody inside. Holly wasted no time getting back to our car. I thought about following her, but I was already on the porch, so I knocked on the door.

A fellow in his early 20s opened the door and then, I think because he saw me in full uniform, closed the door so it was open just a crack. Looking back, I think he did that so others inside could hear our

conversation. The fellow was wearing camouflage, so after introducing myself, I asked him how the hunting was going. He didn't really say, and he was obviously nervous, so I knew something was wrong. As we talked I noticed blood on his pants, so I asked if he had gotten a deer. He hesitated, but knowing I saw the blood on him, he said he had. When I asked if I could see it he hesitated again. Thinking I was about to find an untagged deer, I asked again to see his deer. He finally relented, opened the door and told me to come in.

I couldn't believe what I found. All the doorways leading from the kitchen were covered with blankets. At the kitchen table was a man cutting up a deer. Another fellow was standing next to one of three bunks in the room. They apparently were doing all their sleeping and eating in that one room. I quickly noticed a rifle lying on the floor between the two other bunks. All old country homes have a pantry off the kitchen and this one was no exception. Not every country pantry has two deer lying on the floor, though, but this one did. One was missing a hind quarter, the one the fellow at the table was working on. I knew I had more than just an untagged deer case, and I also knew I was in a tight situation because Holly was out in the car.

I proceeded to ask more questions, but I wasn't getting all the right answers. I could tell the deer had been killed with the rifle and none of them had a hunting license. I ended up taking their firearms and one of the suspects out to my vehicle. I put the guns in my trunk and reminded Holly to stay in the car—a needless reminder, however; Holly was pretty scared. I then radioed the division office in hopes they could contact one of my deputies. They couldn't, nor could they reach either of my neighboring officers. I then asked them to try and locate any State Police officers who might be in the area. While Holly listened for the radio I took the fellow back to the house. I wanted the three of them to gather up all the deer and carry them out to my car. When we got back inside the men wanted to know what was going to happen. I told them they would be charged with two illegal deer and be fined \$400 apiece. They said they didn't have that kind of money. I told them that if that was the case, being nonresidents, they would have to either post a cash bond or

go to jail. They grumbled when I got to the jail part.

As they were gathering up their stuff I noticed a burlap bag in the corner. When I asked what was in it they shrugged their shoulders and then one of them dumped out a red fox. It also had been shot. Fox weren't in season then, so I informed them their fines just went up to \$600 each.

When I stepped out on the porch and told them to get the deer loaded Holly yelled over that the division office was calling. More good news, I was informed the nearest State Police officer was at the other end of the county, investigating an accident.

That particular year I had been issued a Bronco II, and after loading the defendant's firearms and the evidence, we were quite crowded. And I still had Holly to deal with. I took her to some friends nearby and told her to call her mother to come pick her up. After making sure Holly made her connections I headed for the Justice of the Peace in Towanda.

He fined the three \$1800 plus \$70.50 in court costs. They pitched in all their money, hoping they would have enough to pay one of their fines. They came up short. One man offered to put up his rifle as collateral. That was okay with the JP. He typed up an agreement saying that if the defendant did not pay the rest of the fine, his rifle would be sold to cover the remaining fines and costs. The defendant signed without any hesitation.

The plan was that he would go back to New Jersey, get enough money to pay all the fines, and be back the next morning to spring the other two. That's just what he did, and by 9 a.m. the next day, the three were on their way home.

The incident occurred when the movie "Ghost Busters" was popular, and even today, whenever I hear that song, I'm reminded of the case. I even mentioned the "spooktacular" arrest in a Field Note and claimed that Holly and I were the original ghost busters.

Seriously, I know I was lucky, but that case demonstrates how easily a wildlife officer can get in some difficult situations when he least expects it. It's also an example of how we officers can get into situations where there's nobody to offer assistance.

Next month I'll tell you about some lengthy investigations that involved a lot of work yet didn't end the way I had hoped.



# Thornapples



*Chuck Fergus*

A TENT is a marvelous thing. A little envelope of fabric, it protects you from rain and wind and snow. In nature's hostile places it can literally mean the difference between life and death. Bill Moss appreciates the significance of tents. He designs and builds them. One of his tents is pitched, permanently, in New York City's Museum of Modern Art.

I bought a Moss tent two years ago. I sold my old orange, cramped, coffin-shape mountain tent and bought a Moss Flagship II, which was promptly dubbed "Xanadu" because it looked like Kubla Khan's pleasure dome must have looked, a soaring six-sided palace with a little peak at the top that begged for a pennant. The walls were cream-colored, the floor maroon, the rainfly golden tan. I could practically stand in it. Once, when I had it set up to dry in the town square of McLaughlin, South Dakota, a passing Sioux Indian stopped and expressed admiration for the tent's lines. "Is it one of those new dome tents?" he asked.

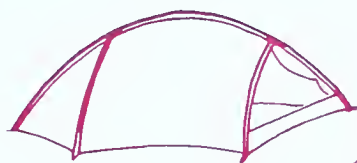
Xanadu stood me in good stead a few nights later, during a wicked storm in the Badlands. I had camped in a tiny island of stunted pines, one of few wooded places in that stretch of arid, eroded hills. The storm blew in from the west, lightning and hail and wind that cuffed the tent and made it quiver. I was lucky to be in the trees, which

slowed the wind somewhat; I would find out just how lucky a year later.

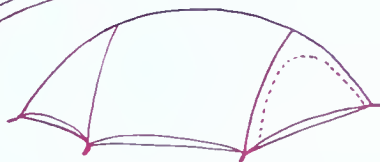
That time my wife and I were in Iceland, on Snaefellsness, Cape of the Snow Mountain. We had gotten off the buss in Olafsvik, a fishing port, and found the campground in a marshy meadow east of town. Iceland is known for its wind, and the wind that day was severe. It came in a hard stream that hurried the rain along parallel to the ground. It threatened to tear the tent from our hands. Finally we wrestled Xanadu up, and staked its corners down.

The wind strengthened, so that we had to lean into it to keep our footing. At about that time I noticed Xanadu leaning in the opposite direction. Suddenly a pole reversed its curve — instead of bowing out to maintain the tent's shape, it flipped inward, making a spot in the fabric like a cupped hand. A gust filled the cup and shook the tent. A rainfly canopy pole popped out of its grommet on one side of the door, and the tent began heaving, catching the wind, spilling it, catching it again. Soon it was either take the tent down or let the wind shred it.

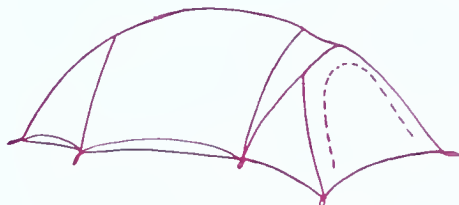
I cursed the name Bill Moss. We had to trudge back to town and take a room in the hotel. My anger did not blind me to the fact that we were lucky. Had we been camped up on Snaefellsjokull, the



*BASIC TENT*



*TENT WITH FLY*



*TENT WITH VESTIBULE*

conic white glacier that dominates the peninsula, we would have been miserable, perhaps in danger: rain-soaked goose down sleeping bags do not hold precious body warmth.

Back in the States I telephoned Moss Tent Works in Camden, Maine. Bill

Moss wasn't in, but I talked with a fellow named Paul Chamberlin who admitted that the Flagship II had been incorrectly designated a "four-season tent" (a term meaning the tent will withstand wind, snow, and almost anything else the weather can dish out). A misunderstanding between the design and advertising departments. They were terribly sorry. Would I like a new tent?

I said goodbye to Xanadu, fine three-season tent that it was, and shipped it back to Maine. Soon there arrived in the mail an Olympic, Moss's top-of-the-line two-person tent. The accompanying literature said it weighed 7 pounds, 14 ounces. I pitched it in the meadow. It was neither as capacious nor as airy as the Flagship II, more hunkered-down and stable-looking—less a Xanadu than a boulder. Cream, tan, maroon. Like Xanadu, it bore the signature "Moss" on the rainfly (a designer tent?). Actually, it looked big enough to sleep three in a pinch. Little inside pockets to put your eyeglasses in at night. No-see-um netting. Sewn-in loops to accept an indoor clothesline. It went up in a jiffy, with shock-corded aluminum poles that clattered together smartly when their segments were unfolded, and heavy-duty plastic buckles that snapped the rainfly to the tent. One of the two doors had a vestibule where you could cook in heavy weather. Like most dome tents, the Olympic didn't absolutely require being staked down: the weight of its occupants would anchor it in a storm, and not having to drive stakes meant it could be erected on rock ledges and stony ground.

Bill Moss may have invented the dome tent. There's an article about his first design in the July 18, 1955, *Life* magazine, entitled "Tent Pops Up and Four Pop In." "Two Michigan outdoorsmen who detest the inconvenience that goes with pitching a heavy tent have come up with an invention to take at least some of the work out of camping. After 18 months of experimentation Bill Moss and Henry Strib-





ley, both avid hunters, perfected a pop-up tent which folds to the size of a knapsack, weighs so little that a child can carry it, opens up like an umbrella, needs no stakes or ropes and is ready to inhabit in four minutes flat. Made of Egyptian cotton with lightweight glass fiber rods, the tent has a canvas floor and a door flap that closes with a slide fastener. . . . It is so flexible that hunters can simply hold it over their heads and run from one shooting spot to another, thus confusing the ducks."

At the time, Bill Moss was an artist. For several years he had been doing weird things with his canvases. One he had set up on the floor in the shape of a large inverted bowl, cut a door in it, and painted a scene of fishermen on the inside. In order to transport it from show to show, he had made it light and collapsible. Somebody looked at it and said, "Hey, that's not a painting, that's a tent."

In 1955, Moss and Stribley (the latter has since seemingly dropped out of the picture) made 1000 of their "Pop Tents." Abercrombie & Fitch bought just one, saying people would never take to round tents. But after the *Life* article, it took just six months to sell the rest. The dome shape caught on, and other tentmakers adopted it. A dome, after all, is half of a sphere, and a sphere encloses more space relative to its surface area—and, thus, its weight—than any other geometric form. And light weight and generous space are prime attributes in a tent that will be carried on your back and lived in for days on end.

Since the '50s, Moss has been an "innovator of tensioned fabric technology": a designer of tents. To him, the tent is a form of sculpture, fabric sculpture. "I don't want to do sculpture you can look at," he has been quoted as saying, "I want to do sculpture you can get in and live in." While his specialty has remained backpacking tents, Moss has also done a giant fabric sculpture to

hang from the ceiling of the Seattle Coliseum; and a 24x24-foot fabric house, which won a \$20,000 design award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Moss tents range from the one-person Solet, at 3 pounds 2 ounces, including rainfly, to the OP 200, which contains 192 square feet and is billed as "an expedition base camp, guest house, studio, entertainment center, etc." Most of the designs are domes or modified domes; well made, they are backed by a lifetime guarantee. The Star Gazer, a three-season shelter for two, features a screened top window through which its occupants can gaze at the stars (the cautious may wish to put up the rainfly, which obscures the view). The Star Gazer was the design chosen for the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art.

Moss tents aren't cheap. The Olympic costs \$400. And yet dependable shelter is priceless. Money has no meaning in the sleeting night on Snaefellsjokull, or a blow in the Badlands.

### Four Minutes Flat

Last summer we took our Olympic on a 10-day backpack in Wyoming. We got so we could put it up in four minutes flat. It excluded mosquitoes. When it rained, we cooked our macaroni and cheese, our lentil soup, in the shelter of its vestibule. Climbing the peaks above camp, we looked down to see the Olympic's dome pitched next to my old angular mountain tent (I had sold the mountain tent to the two friends accompanying us on the trip). The Olympic's shape and its tan skin made it blend with the landscape, like a boulder come to rest in the grass. It fended off several thunderstorms, including one that set the walls to thumping and the fly to humming. In the warm pale glow beneath the over-arching dome, I got to feeling secure again.



THE TEAM that did the shooting to determine arrow velocities consisted of, left to right, Tom Slusser, Mifflinville; Darla Cotner, Danville; Douglas Carrathers, Mifflinville; and Mike Shelhamer, Nescopeck.

*Following the arrow for . . .*

## The First 30 Yards

By Keith C. Schuyler

WE ALL KNOW roughly what happens the moment an arrow is released. The *result* becomes obvious a moment later, when the arrow strikes the target—or whatever. What happens between release and impact, however, is largely unknown. How much velocity, for example, does an arrow lose before striking the target?

Initial speed, of course, varies according to the weight of the missile and draw weight of the bow. Still, I wanted to get a better understanding of an arrow's flight over its first 30 yards. I again enlisted the help of Thomas Slusser, who provided the means of evaluating the overdraw device for bows ("Overdraw-Overrated?," September 1987), and several proven archers. Tom's indoor range, Tom's Archery Hut, is located between Mifflinville and Mainville. It's set up for shooting at 20 yards, but by using some of his work area, we were able to get 30-yard shots.

To come up with a spectrum of arrow speeds and to supplement his own efforts, Tom called upon Darla Cotner of Danville, Douglas Carrathers, Mifflinville, and Michael Shelhamer, Nescopeck, all archers of known ability.

For the tests Tom used his 62-pound Precision Shooting Equipment (PSE) Jet-Flight cam bow. Although he has a draw length of 31 inches, Tom equipped his bow with a short overdraw attachment and shot a 20-13 aluminum arrow only 27 inches long. Most shooters used 125-grain field target points, but Tom's three-blade Brute-III broadhead weighed 127 grains. His total arrow weight was 417 grains.

Darla Cotner, 13-time winner of the state women's championship, brought a 60-pound Jennings T-Star-II set for her draw of 26½ inches. She shot a 27-inch 20-16 shaft weighing 465 grains with its field tip. However, she volun-





**DOUG CARRATHERS** takes careful aim while Darla and Mike wait their turns. Placing an arrow through the small opening over the chronograph was a challenge, even for these expert archers.

teered to also shoot two broadheads, a 125-grain Thunderhead and a 145-grain Bear two-blade head with insert. Total arrow weight with the Bear head was 485 grains.

Doug Carrathers used a PSE Magniflite Express bow that had a weight of 72 pounds with Doug's 32-inch draw. He shot 27-inch 21-15 shafts, also utilizing a short overdraw device. Both his three-blade Thunderheads and field tips brought his total arrow weight to 465 grains.

Mike Shelhamer was equipped with his Pearson ZB-II cam bow that weighs 65 pounds at his 32-inch draw. Mike shot 22-16 shafts 30 inches long. His three-blade Thunderhead broadheads match his field points at 125 grains for a total arrow weight of 545 grains.

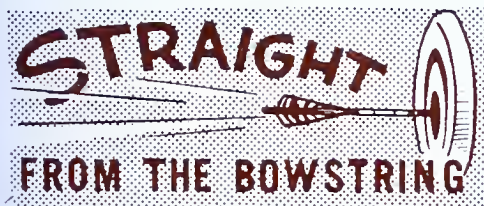
Equipment was mentioned so a

comparison of changes in speed could be evaluated rather than just speed per se. For, as you will see, there was a near consistency in flight patterns, regardless of bows, heads and arrows. To make comparisons, a Custom Chronograph was employed throughout the tests. Except for Darla, each of the shooters used a mechanical release.

### Greg Volunteered

Tom's son Gregg volunteered to retrieve arrows and check whether doubtful arrows registered on the chronograph. As an aiming spot, a small red bullseye was placed on a circular, free hanging, polyethylene butt of sufficient thickness to prevent any passthroughs.

To set up for the tests, Tom built a combination rack and barrier of 2x4 lumber and  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch plywood. The plywood rack was placed about 16 inches in front of the chronograph to protect the expensive chronograph from errant arrows. Further protection was provided by a system of 2x4s, although the device's metal side braces were af-





**TOM SLUSSER let Schuyler use his indoor range and set up the chronograph so it would be protected from errant arrows. Although not the most scientific, the test did show how much arrow velocity changes over the first 30 yards.**

which varied more than one foot per second with others from the same bow was shot again.

Each shot was a special challenge. Archers not only had to place their arrows through a 12-x14-inch entrance, they also had to get their arrows over two openings in the chronograph that are 1¼ inches wide and separated by little more than a foot.

Tom was the first to shoot at 20 yards. His drop in speed was 10 feet per second with field points and 14 for his broadheads. Darla dropped 6 fps at the 20-yard distance for her field points, 11 for the 145-grain broadhead, and 10 for the 125-grain broadhead. Doug lost 8 and 9 fps, respectively, for his field points and equal-weight broadheads. Mike's loss was 9 and 11 fps with identical weight field points and broadheads, in that order. Average loss at 20 yards was about 9.75 fps. That represented an average loss of only 4.7 percent from the initial speed of all arrows.

Just how significant these figures are is left to individual interpretation of the reader. Obviously, although slight in some instances, and actually faster from Tom's bow initially, configuration of the broadhead generally slowed it down more than the field point at 20 yards.

What to me was the big surprise was yet to come.

Between 20 and 30 yards, loss in speed was less than half, on an average, than it was between initial bow speed and 20 yards. Tom Slusser lost but 3 fps with his field points, 7 with the broadheads. Darla, with the lightest bow, also lost but 3 fps with the field points, 4 with the 145-grain broadhead, and but 3 fps with the lighter broadhead. Doug's 72-pound bow dropped 7 feet per second on the field points, only 4 with the broadhead. Mike lost but 3 fps

fording no such safety. They emerged with a number of minor nicks from the broadheads.

With all in readiness, each archer took several shots through the chronograph at close range to determine arrow speed off the bow. With his overdraw, Tom registered 214 feet per second (fps) with the field head and 217 fps with his broadhead. Darla had 191 with the field point and, perhaps surprisingly, both broadheads came off her bow at 190 feet per second, despite a 20-grain difference in weight.

### **Zipped Out**

Doug Carrathers's field points zipped out at 239 fps, his broadheads at 234. Only one fps separated Mike Shelhamer's arrows, with the field tip the faster, at 208 feet.

With all bows ready for the experiment, the archers moved back 20 yards to determine arrow speed loss at that distance. It must be stated that these tests are not the most scientific, but every effort was made to obtain true readings at each distance. Any arrow



**DARLA**—13-time winner of the state women's championship—and Tom carefully checked the figures as the experiment progressed. Velocity readings were taken at the bow and at 20 and 30 yards.



with both field points and broadheads. Average loss in speed between 20 and 30 yards was a fraction over 4 feet per second, less than 2 percent.

While the evidence produced by this experiment might not stand up in court, it points to certain factors that should be meaningful. Apparently, the

forces on an arrow immediately after release have a greater effect on velocity than those on an arrow after it becomes aerodynamically stable, when it then loses speed at a slower rate. Eventually, of course, drag and gravity will bring it back to earth. There appear to be certain inconsistencies as well as consis-

## Arrow Velocities at 0, 20 and 30 Yards

| Shooter | Arrowhead                        | Speed (fps)    |          |          |
|---------|----------------------------------|----------------|----------|----------|
|         |                                  | at chronograph | 20 yards | 30 yards |
| Tom     | 125-grain field target           | 214            | 204      | 201      |
|         | 127-grain 3-blade broadhead      | 217            | 203      | 196      |
| Darla   | 125-grain field target           | 191            | 185      | 182      |
|         | 145-grain broad-head with insert | 190            | 179      | 175      |
|         | 125-grain Thunderhead            | 190            | 180      | 177      |
| Doug    | 125-grain field target           | 239            | 231      | 224      |
|         | 125-grain Thunderhead            | 235            | 226      | 222      |
| Mike    | 125-grain field target           | 208            | 199      | 196      |
|         | 125-grain Thunderhead            | 207            | 196      | 193      |



tencies in this comparison among various weight bows, shafts and broadheads. Darla Cotner, shooting with finger release and the lightest bow of the four, put on a performance that would be difficult to match by any but the most expert. Not once did she hit

the somewhat studded inside boundary of the entry to the chronograph. There is always the human element to consider because no two persons shoot exactly the same. But the figures here do provide at least close approximations of what happens to arrow speed in that first 30 yards.

The unanswered question—"What happens beyond 30 yards?"—is one that would be difficult to answer. It would require a succession of chronographs and/or other sophisticated equipment inside a building high enough and long enough to provide still air for acceptable results.

It also would require a team of archers with the skills exhibited by those who provided some answers here—up to 30 yards.

## Really Nice Guys

Although bats are among the most relentlessly persecuted animals on Earth, Europeans recognize their beneficial value to man as pollinators of fruit and nut trees, dispersers of seeds and predators of pesky insects. Bats are legally protected in all European countries as well as in Russia. In fact, thousands of bat "houses" have been placed in national forests throughout Europe, especially in England.

## ***GAMEcooking Tips***

The feeding ground of all waterfowl determines the taste of the flesh. If a goose lived on wild plants it may be strong tasting. If it fed on corn and meal, it will be delicious and mild. Vary your marinating time to compensate for feeding areas. In order to have generous helpings, allow one-half pound of goose per person. If you fear the goose will be strong or tough, sprinkle the body cavity generously with tenderizer and allow to stand another hour before roasting.

### **Roast Goose**

- 1 goose
- 2 cups sweet red vermouth
- 1 onion
- 3 ribs celery, with leaves
- 2 tart apples, quartered
- Flavored meat tenderizer (optional)

Place goose in deep container and pour vermouth over bird. Turn frequently to coat entire body. Allow to stand overnight, turning at least four times. Cover marinating goose tightly with plastic wrap to prevent evaporation of wine. To roast, place all remaining ingredients in body cavity, put on rack in open pan, and roast slowly at 250 degrees, allowing one-half hour per pound. Baste frequently with reserved marinade. This tastes remarkably like beef, and yields a very rich, all dark meat entree.

Average size goose serves 4.

—FROM WILD GAME COOKERY  
BY CAROL VANCE WARY





**FLINCHING** is a nemesis that plagues all shooters. It can be minimized by using a sling, taking a proper stance and, among other things, learning to properly squeeze the trigger.

## ***The hunter's nemesis:***

# FLINCHING

**By Don Lewis**

**Photos by Helen Lewis**

**I** STRUGGLED up a steep hillside into a clearing and saw a buck, but only for a few seconds before it and several of its cousins melted into a thick stand of underbrush. Flitting movements in the brush told me the deer were moving. When one stepped into a small opening, my scope showed it was a buck. I was caught between a rock and a hard place—out of breath and with not even a tiny sapling to use for a rest. Worse yet, the severe angle of the terrain made a sitting or kneeling shot impossible. It was offhand or nothing.

I tried to lock every muscle in my body into a tight shooting position, but the crosswire jumped all over the deer

and much of the territory around it. In a last ditch attempt, I swept the crosshairs horizontally across the buck and yanked (that's the proper word for it) the trigger. The buck snorted and took off.

A half-hour later, I topped a rise and saw the buck coming in my direction. That time I sat behind a battered stump that offered a solid rest and dropped my quarry.

What is flinching and why do we do it? I doubt if there's a logical definition for flinchings, but I can give one reason why some of us do it. Basically, it's fear of recoil. As we aim a big game rifle, recoil often dominates our thinking.



We fail to concentrate on the sight picture. Nine times out of ten, the trigger is yanked. There are, however, other reasons. They run the gamut from muzzle blast to tension. I have fired thousands of rifles and have little concern about recoil, except with some of the very large magnums, yet I missed that buck because I flinched. In my case, it was the quick buildup of tension; I was in a hurry to get the shot off. I was a victim of my own poor judgment. I was positive the buck would move before I could shoot, and I wasn't about to let that happen. That was foolish thinking. Taking an extra three seconds to properly squeeze the trigger may have changed things around. Let's face it; I flinched.

Sometimes we flinch because we don't get the shot off quick enough. Very few shooters can hold a rifle reasonably still in the offhand position for any length of time. Competitive shooters probably have the edge in this category, but few members of this distinguished group can hold a rifle steady for an extended period of time. For most of us, the longer we hold the rifle in the offhand position, the more we shake and weave until we reach the

**TRIGGER** pull is most important when attempting offhand shots, particularly a difficult one such as this, because there's nothing to keep the rifle from wavering if the trigger is yanked.

near breaking point. Finally, we yank the trigger.

No one shoots accurately when tension stiffens the muscles and increases the heart rate. When I give instructions to a shooter at the benchrest, I tell the person to allow their body to sag and to completely relax. The body must be free of all tensions and frozen muscles. The mind, not fear, must control the body. I realize that's hard to accomplish when firing a very powerful rifle. Literally everybody fears recoil. It's as if the mind automatically signals the muscles to get set for the punishment recoil will bring. It's actually a game of psychology. Our physical body must not listen to what the psychological side is saying. The shooter must change his thinking and be the dominant force instead of allowing the rifle to be the dominant factor.

Flinching carries a stigma; it makes us ashamed. In fact, many shooters won't admit they flinch, but every shooter does. In the shooting realm, it's an integral part of *Homo sapiens'* makeup. It's almost impossible not to flinch.

Several years ago I watched a line of experienced hunters competing at a turkey shoot. Common paper plates with pencil dots in the center were the targets. Apparently, the shooter I was watching forgot to move the safety on his shotgun to the firing position. He aimed just for a second and then jerked the trigger. The flinch was obvious, and it alerted me to watch more closely for telltale signs of flinching in the







**PRACTICE** on the range is paramount to good shooting in the field. Debbie Lewis, above, using a rifle she enjoys to shoot, concentrates on her hold and trigger squeeze to get off a smooth shot.

other contestants. After watching several squads shoot, I came to the conclusion that even the most experienced shooters flinch on occasion.

Not only are we ashamed that we flinch, we are also prone to deny it. An acquaintance had a powerful magnum rifle he didn't enjoy shooting. He flinched on nearly every shot from the benchrest. He would not admit it, though, no matter how poor his shooting results were. Then it struck home. He forgot to put a cartridge in the chamber, and his flinch was so obvious he could deny it no longer. He swallowed his pride, traded the magnum for a cartridge with less recoil, and suddenly became a better shot.

Is there a cure or a method to stop flinching? If I had that answer, I would be in a much better financial position. There is no panacea or cure-all remedy. I might go so far to say that it's impossible to stop flinching. It will always be with us and, under certain conditions, it will raise its ugly head and cause every one of us to miss. On the other hand, there are ways of reducing this Achilles' heel of the shooting fraternity.

On my second shot at the buck, I sat

down and rested the rifle. Not only did that action make aiming easier, it also reduced the possibility that I would fire prematurely. The old stump steadied the rifle and let me concentrate more on the trigger squeeze and less on keeping the reticle on the buck. With the reticle essentially motionless, I didn't have to yank the trigger; I squeezed it off. With the rest, I had eliminated the aiming factor that had earlier caused me to fire hastily.

### **All Shooting Positions**

Flinching is not limited to offhand shooting. It occurs in all shooting positions, but it's easier to eliminate from the sitting, kneeling and prone positions. Each of these affords some type of rest. In the army I shot better scores from the sitting position than from kneeling. Other shooters did quite well from the kneeling position. I could hold the rifle steadier from the sitting position, and could concentrate on the sight picture and trigger release. For one thing, I was always uncomfortable while shooting from kneeling. Again, I have to reiterate that a shooter must be comfortable to shoot well.



**THIS IS** the sitting stance Don advocates for good shooting. Note that the arms are locked inside the legs, not up on top of the knees where many inexperienced shooters are apt to place them.

There is an ongoing argument whether the prone position is more stable than sitting. I'm inclined to go along with those who favor the prone position, but it has its limitations. It's very difficult, even in the chuck pastures, to shoot prone. High grass, humps and rolls defeat the prone shooter. A wider variation of shots can be taken from the sitting position on rough or rolling terrain. A top shooter using a sling with the sitting position is almost a miniature benchrest. Next to a solid rest, the sitting position is probably the best choice. But I must warn that it takes some time and effort to develop the proper sitting stance. The body must lean forward. Practice until you can place the left side of the left upper arm (for a right hand shooter) against the right side of the left shin. The right arm can be placed against the right leg if that is comfortable, but be sure the left arm makes solid contact with the left leg. This is really leaning into the shot, and older shooters may have some trouble getting in the ideal position. Still, anything close to it will give support. Don't try to balance the point of the left elbow on top of the left knee. You need as much contact surface as possible. That's what steadies the rifle.

Let's step back to my first shot at the buck. Note that I fired from the off-hand position as the crosshairs swept lengthwise across the deer. By moving

the rifle in a slow, sweeping movement, there was less chance for an elevation error. The horizontal sweep ironed out the up and down movement of the rifle. Also, a deer's body is longer than it is wide. By sweeping across the buck, I took advantage of a larger area. Instead of trying to hit a foot-square ribcage, I also included the neck and shoulders in my target. In this case, I moved from the front to the back. However, on a standing woodchuck, I would bring the reticle down across the chuck's body to take advantage of its height.

There is one golden rule for good shooting: the trigger must be squeezed. I've been stressing that point for over two decades. When the trigger is properly squeezed, there can be no flinching. That's why I believe it's imperative for a hunter to use a cartridge that he enjoys shooting, providing, of course, that it has adequate killing power. The tendency to flinch lessens when using low recoil cartridges.

I haven't defined what flinching is, but from my point of view it consists of three words—yanking the trigger. Whether we want to admit it or not, many of our misses are the direct result of yanking the trigger. Why we flinch is, perhaps, not as important as the fact we do flinch, and facts show that as long as we continue to flinch, we will never become consistent shots. Unexplained misses (at least those we think



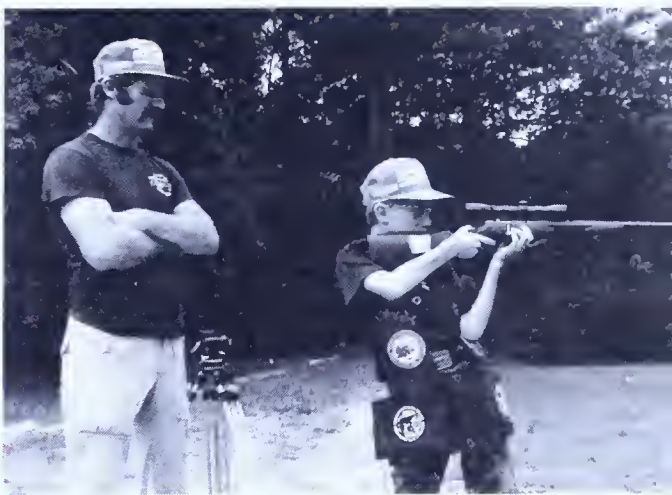
**USING A small caliber rifle to teach shooting fundamentals will lessen the fear of recoil and reduce flinching. It is better, however, to use a firearm that fits properly.**

are unexplainable) will continue to plague us. To improve our shooting from all positions, we have to squeeze — not yank — the trigger.

The best training cartridge is the 22 rimfire. It has almost no recoil and very little muzzle blast. Even the novice soon learns to handle the 22 rimfire with complete confidence. Flinching can be cured with a lot of benchrest shooting with the 22. When noise and recoil are eliminated, the shooter learns to relax and allows the body to sag. The mind is free of fear and the muscles have nothing in the way of punishment to worry about. Concentrating on aiming and squeezing off the shot become routine and, best of all, group sizes will print out smaller and smaller over a period of time. That is the first step.

The second step is to overcome a larger cartridge, a 222 Remington, for example. New shooters may be apprehensive about shooting a centerfire, but as soon as they learn there is more noise than recoil, their confidence will return. I must add that these aren't 15-minute sessions crammed into one afternoon of shooting. Developing sound shooting skills takes time. Fears and apprehensions don't disappear like water running off a duck's back. But, like falling drops of water that wear away a stone, these relaxing shooting sessions will eventually wear away the fears that are embedded deep in the shooter's psychological makeup. It's a step at a time, from a small cartridge to a more powerful one.

Offhand shooting is always tough, whether it's on the range or in the woods. We flinch more from offhand



than from any position that offers a rest. When we are unsteady and weaving, it's hard to not flinch. That's why, when stillhunting for deer, I always stop near a tree. If a deer comes by, I can use the tree for a rest. That practice has paid off many times, and I've killed a number of running deer while using a tree for a rest.

### Portable Rest

Many big game hunters (woodchuckers, too) ridicule the shooting sling. They tend to think of it as strictly a competitive device, and feel it offers no advantages to the hunter. That is wrong, believe me. The shooting sling is actually a portable rest. The military taught a lot of us the advantages of a sling. The hunter who understands how to use a sling will ultimately be better off when that unexpected target forces a shot from the offhand position. A friend of mine can stay in a 4-inch bullseye at 100 yards from the offhand position when using a sling. Sometimes he does better, and that's a fairly impressive testimony for the sling.

The flinching problem will never be licked. That's a fact. But by using big game cartridges that have low or medium recoil, and by learning to squeeze the trigger instead of yanking it, you'll have a trophy instead of a poor alibi.

# *In the wind*

bob mitchell



In 1954, 20 California bighorn sheep were released in the Hart Mountain National Wildlife Refuge, Oregon. Since then the herd has prospered, allowing the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to transplant 200 bighorns to other areas. About 1250 are now in the state. In the most recent transplant, 20 bighorns were moved. Funds for that operation were raised through the auction of one bighorn sheep tag and a grant from the North America Wild Sheep Foundation.

A district court judge in Kentucky fined two poachers \$1000 each and sent them to jail for six months—no probation—for taking deer in a county closed to deer hunting. In addition, the men had to pay \$250 for each deer they killed.

**In just one day, November 30, 1987, Ducks Unlimited raised \$2,042,245, the most money raised in a single day during the conservation group's 50-year history.**

The number of Canada geese wintering in North Carolina has dropped from 232,000 to 22,000 over the past 25 years. In an effort to turn that trend around, the state Wildlife Resources Commission has embarked on a new program to improve feeding and resting areas for wintering flocks throughout the state, and to establish resident populations along the coasts. Funds to start the project came from a state appropriation and funds to continue it will come from a new waterfowl hunting license that becomes mandatory this year.

To increase public awareness of the acid precipitation problem and to encourage legislators to act on this important issue, the National Audubon Society has formed a "Citizens Acid Rain Monitoring Network," a group of volunteers who are collecting and testing the pH of rainfall in their communities. In addition, each member is reporting his results to the local news media, and Audubon, on a monthly basis, is distributing results to the national news media.

Thanks to a tip through their Operation Game Thief program, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department successfully prosecuted an individual for killing a bald eagle. The caller received a \$500 reward. The poacher, who hoped to have the eagle mounted, was fined \$1,000, placed on probation for three years, lost his hunting privileges for one year, and was ordered to perform four hours of community service every week for a year.

**When North Carolina sportsmen complained about illegal deer killings last fall, state wildlife officers responded. Culminating a week-long investigation, called Operation Wolfpack, in which 24 officers patrolled a 5-county area in Jeeps, boats and aircraft, 44 people ended up being charged with illegally killing deer and a host of other violations.**

The National Park Service obtained almost 5000 acres in Maine from the Scott Paper Company. The acquisition will give permanent protection to over 31 miles of the Appalachian Trail. It is the largest single purchase in the Service's ongoing Appalachian Trail land-acquisition project, and will protect some of the most scenic areas of the Trail. Of the 263 miles of the AT in Maine, 181 are now protected.

Both Tennessee and Connecticut enjoyed outstanding success with their osprey recovery programs. Tennessee, which had only one successful osprey nest from the 1940s through the '60s, had a pair build a nest in the mid-'70s. Since then the number of nests in the state grew to 7 in 1983, 15 in 1986, and to 17 last year. In Connecticut, 74 young fledged from 35 nests last year, breaking the production record set in 1985, when 72 young fledged from 43 nests.





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*Snowy Egret*, by John Pritko, is the sixth limited edition fine art print available through the Pennsylvania Game Commission's Working Together for Wildlife program. As with the previous editions, *Snowy Egret* is limited to 600 signed and numbered prints. Image size is approximately 15 × 22½ inches, printed on acid-free 100 percent rag paper. Price is \$125; framed prints are an additional \$97.50. Requests for specific numbers will be satisfied on a first-come, first-served basis. Limited numbers of *Country Lane Kestrel* and *Autumn Challenge*, 1986 and 1987 prints, are still available. Orders should be sent to the Pennsylvania Game Commission, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Dept. AR, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.



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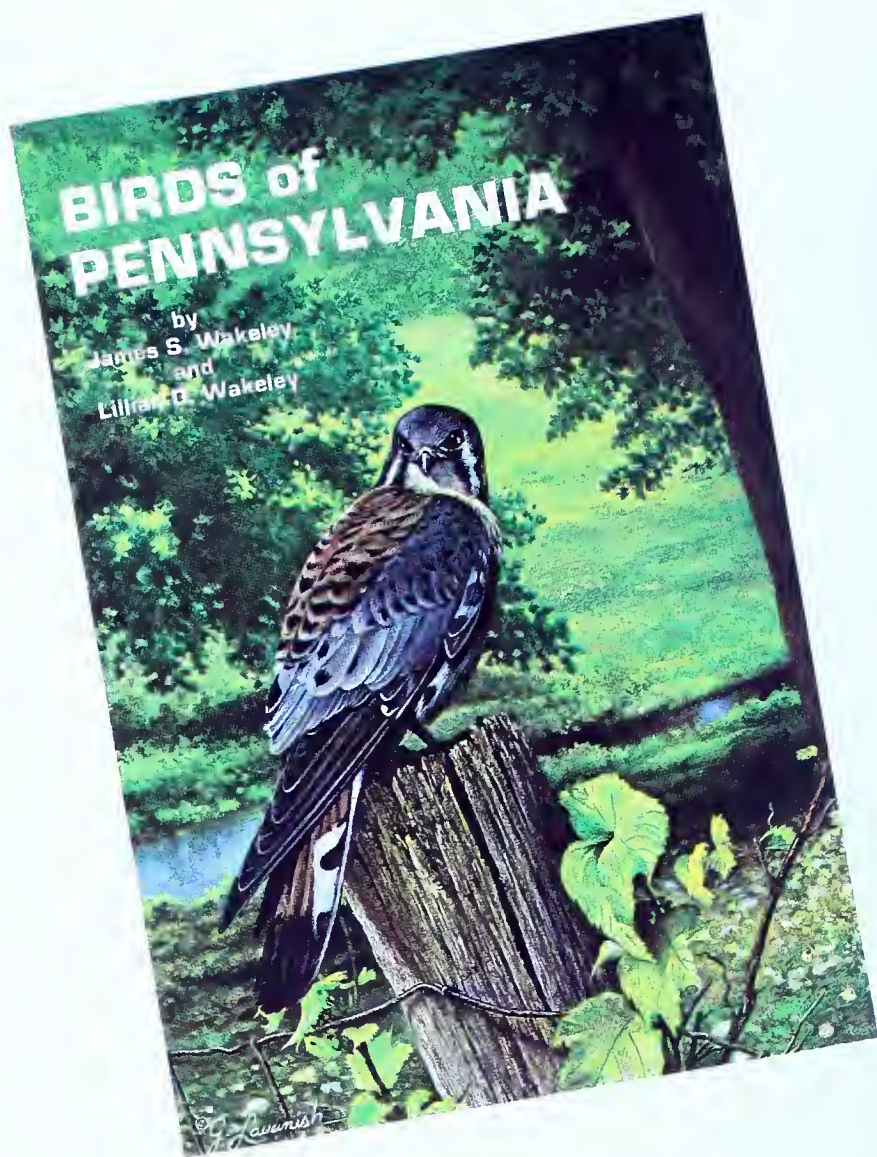
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**COVER PAINTING BY BOB SOPCHICK**  
(Cover Story on Page 18)

## State of Affairs

**W**HEN A four-million-gallon tank ruptured on January 2, 1988, spilling nearly a million gallons of diesel fuel into the Monongahela River, most people immediately thought of the health and safety of downstream residents. Thoughts of many also turned to the fate of wildlife. Thoughts of a few turned to greed.

Attempts to rescue waterfowl and other wildlife, in the wake of what amounted to the worst inland oil spill ever, are highlighted in a photo feature on pages 32 and 33. As news of the oil spill spread, many conservation officers, wildlife rehabilitators and volunteers, some from hundreds of miles away, converged on Pittsburgh. Teams began capturing afflicted animals, technicians established rescue stations, and, in a strict military fashion, people began performing the arduous tasks required to treat sickened birds. This effort is significant not because of the numbers of animals saved, but because it demonstrates the compelling spirit of concern and cooperation that can be mustered in defense of our natural resources during a major crisis.

Such a show of support is not new. Many people are always willing to rally around a cause to help wildlife. The Game Commission's deputy force, featured in last month's editorial, is another fine example. There are countless others, though, who monitor bluebirds, build bird feeders, and, among other activities, clean up litter from game lands parking lots. Pennsylvania, as the rest of the nation, is full of people willing to devote time and energies to protecting natural resources.

Unfortunately, a few have no regard for wildlife, other natural resources, or even human health if it stands in the way of making a dollar. And in the case of the January 2 oil spill, decisions were made that ultimately turned an unfortunate accident into a deliberate catastrophe.

As the oil spill cleanup was progressing, various regulatory agencies monitoring the situation discovered unusually high levels of toxic wastes. Among other contaminants of dubious origin, chloroform and methylene chloride, known cancer-causing agents, were found in concentrations ten times expected levels and greatly exceeding acceptable federal standards. Apparently, to save the costs of proper disposal, "somebody" decided to surreptitiously dump the chemicals into the river, hoping they would go undetected — or be untraceable — during the excitement and confusion attendant to the oil spill.

Those carcinogens are known to accumulate in fish and other aquatic life. Consequently, every living organism dependent upon the water, including the thousands of people living in the tri-state area, were jeopardized, all just so some could save a few dollars.

The oil spill was an accident. Accidents do happen, however, and Ashland Oil Company has assumed the responsibility for paying the clean up costs. Those countless individuals who gave of their time and talents can take satisfaction in knowing they did everything humanly possible to minimize the unavoidable side effects. Those who dumped the chemicals, causing a situation far worse than the actual spill, can be held only in highest contempt. Although the guilty culprits might never be identified, every attempt should be made to bring them to justice. Such blatant disregard of the environment cannot be tolerated. — *Bob Mitchell*





***Rugged and versatile . . .***

## AMMO BOXES

**By Ron Swartley**

**T**HEY COME as small as a bread box and as large as a refrigerator carton. Some are even bigger. They're made of wood, simple cold-rolled steel, aluminum alloy or fiberglass. And they're rugged—rugged enough to bounce around any hunting vehicle headed for the outback. They're *ammo boxes*, of course. Many of these government issue items were made specifically to withstand the rigors of jeep or tank-borne life on a battlefield. In addition to storing ammunition, some saw duty as toolboxes and component storage containers, for example. Their paint scheme depends primarily on which branch of the military service they were assigned to. But whatever branch, the paint used on metal surfaces is likely to be the anti-corrosion

type, which is a definite advantage, (though it won't protect forever, as evidenced by the rusty cold-rolled steel boxes occasionally found. Those painted in gray tones are probably ex-Navy owned, and a bit more likely to be made of aluminum alloy, and/or painted to withstand the devastating corrosiveness of salt air.

### **Rugged**

Because they're generally rugged, inexpensive, and come in a variety of sizes and shapes, ammo boxes can be put to many different uses in a sportsman's vehicle.

For example, a large wooden ammo box can be easily made into a rooftop storage unit (single or doubled up). Such a carrier is light enough to be



ASIDE FROM the protection they offer, ammo boxes are also useful for keeping items organized.



WITH JUST a few modifications an ammo box can be easily made into an ideal container for protecting valuable and fragile equipment.



AMMO BOXES are great containers for storing survival items, above, camping gear and other objects.



BARBARA REED, above, checks provisions stored in ammo boxes kept in her 4x4. Look for these handy durable containers at military surplus outlets, left, sporting goods shops and hardware stores.





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installed and removed with minimal effort. Cracks should be filled with silicone sealer and then the entire unit should be given a couple coats of paint; for an added touch, use a color that matches the vehicle's. Add a hasp for a lock if there isn't one already. For just a little effort a rooftop storage unit can be had for much less cost than those specifically manufactured for the purpose. It may not be the prettiest thing in the world, but it'll serve as handy storage for camping gear and other safari materials.

Long wooden units also make dandy bench-like storage units for vans and 4x4s. By adding a Formica top, the result can be almost classy.

Smaller boxes have a wide variety of uses. One made of thicker metal can be turned into a traveling strongbox by welding or bolting (tighten nuts from inside) it to the vehicle floor. Install a heavy duty hasp and lock, and you'll have a box you can leave valuables in while you're out hunting. An ordinary thief won't likely have the tools required to break into one of these very easily.

You can make a tough camera case from an ammo box, too, by putting foam protection inside, and maybe adding cardboard spacers and foam rubber cutouts. With the box fastened shut, photo equipment is completely protected.

Smaller boxes make good tool and accessory holders. Instead of having tools and liquids in half a dozen places around the vehicle, you can put them all together in one compact box.

Small flat boxes can be adapted to house a CB radio, protecting the set from accidental bumps and not so accidental thieves. One friend of mine houses a CB inside an ammo box on the back of his ATV. There, the radio is completely protected from accidents, tree branches and the weather.

Certain types of ammo boxes can be adapted as travel trunks and saddlebag units on motorcycles and ATVs.

Of course, shells, cartridges and other firearm related materials can be

safely stored in ammo boxes, secure from knocks and bruises. If locked, they're safe from the curiosity of small fry, too.

These are just some of the ways sportsmen can use ammo boxes. The variety of uses is limited only by the imagination.

One cautionary note: It's a good idea to solidly secure heavier boxes to vehicle structural members so they won't become flying missiles in the event of a drastic stop.

### Greater Variety

Look for ammo boxes in surplus stores, retail salvage outlets and in sporting goods and hardware stores. The bigger the metropolitan area, the greater the variety of boxes you're likely to find. If your closest surplus store doesn't have the size and type you're looking for, ask the store manager where a major supplier is located. You'll often find classified ads listing surplus materials such as ammo boxes, and notices of auctions where they'll be put on sale. Retail prices for smaller boxes start at less than \$4.

When you get the box home you may want to modify it. Most often these boxes don't have a locking system, so you may want to install a hasp and lock. Some lids just lift off (held in place only by clamp locks). It's usually a simple matter, though, to add hinges. The handles are often in inconvenient places, but again, new handles are easily installed using bolts or sheet metal screws. If the box isn't as weathertight as desired, it's not a major operation to add moulding materials and sealers to keep out moisture and dust. Finally, many will want to improve on the olive drab, battleship gray—or whatever color—by adding their own paint scheme.



BOB  
SOPCHIC.



# Diary of a Spring Gobbler Season

By Richard Tate

*March 7*—Too early for gobblers? Maybe. Anyhow, the weather has been nice lately, so I got up and took a short walk out off Mountain Road. Just after daylight I heard a gobbler sounding off in the distance. He gobbled only a couple of times and then shut up. When I left the trail I saw several deer—they were in nice shape.

On the drive home I saw the gobbler strutting for his hens in a small field off to the side of the road. When I stopped my truck for a better look, most of the birds flew right over me. Not the gobbler, though. He slowly strutted off into the woods, probably irritated because I'd disturbed his morning rendezvous. I was home by 7:30, but what a dandy morning, and the date's the earliest I've ever heard a tom talking.

*March 19*—I picked Dad up at 4:50, just as it was starting to spit snow. We weren't expecting to hear anything, but went to the little hunting cabin he belongs to anyway. As soon as we got out of the truck, though, we heard a gobble. We walked about a hundred yards out the road and sat down. The gobbling kept up, from at least three different birds. They kept carrying on as the snow increased, and after the sky lightened some hens joined in. Pretty soon eight or nine turkeys were carrying on a major conversation around us. The hens and two of the gobblers passed within 50 yards of Dad, in some laurel. Dad had a camera, but he didn't get it out because of what had turned into a steady snowfall. One gobbler, a huge longbeard, passed within a dozen steps of me, gobbling wildly. He glanced my way a couple of times, but as I was covered with a half-inch of snow, he probably thought I

was a weird looking log. After all, no normal human would be out in the woods on that kind of morning, would he?

*April 2*—This evening, my seven-year-old son Bobby and I took a short walk out the face of Rattlesnake Knob, a place where I had never been before. It was really cold. Bobby had his trusty push-button turkey call with him, and after he made a series of yelps, a gobbler replied. "Let's sneak up on him," he said. Knowing that was futile, I agreed to do it anyhow. And just as we rounded a corner on an old logging trail, we saw four dandy birds. One was huge. They weren't at all worried about us. In fact, they just slowly ambled up over the knob toward, I suppose, their roost. They paid no attention to us and clucked regularly as they moved. Maybe I ought to take Bobby with me when the season arrives, I thought, he calls better than I.

*April 3*—A good looking morning. Dad and I took the "farm tour" today. The farm tour is a drive around to various local farms, during which we stop near woodlots to listen for gobblers. We didn't hear a thing on this trip. It was the first time in several years we hadn't heard at least one tom sounding off. It was really disappointing, especially after the good start we'd had so far this spring.

*April 4*—Before going to church Dad and I took a hike. We were hoping to find a gobbler far from any road, one we could hunt without interference when the season started. We lucked out: we found two. They were several hundred yards apart and probably two

miles from the hard road. They certainly made the 4:00 a.m. wakeup worthwhile. And, when I got home, there was time to crawl back into the sack for a short nap before church. We didn't fool with those birds at all, hoping they'd stay put. Calling a gobbler in once the season begins is tough enough without teaching them anything about fake hens.

*April 5*—Dad and I took the farm tour again. This time we heard a tom on our first stop. He seemed to be trying to make more noise than the chorus of songbirds. Because he was close to the road I decided to try to call him in for a photo. When he hung up at 50 yards I tried to cackle. That shut him up. I guess the Rich Tate cackle needs some more work.

*April 8*—I have been seeing a flock of turkeys on my ride to work during the past couple of weeks. The flock has at least four gobblers. For each of the past several days, however, the flock has diminished by several birds. Hens, I figure, must be nesting early this spring. There were only three turkeys in the field today, two gobblers and a hen. The gobblers were fighting over her. They jumped off the ground and clawed at each other with their feet. I had to leave for work before the fight ended, so I'm still wondering which tom got the hen.

*April 9*—This evening Donna, Bobby, and I took a short walk out Rattlesnake Knob where Bobby and I saw the birds last week. At 6:30 one started gobbling. Not long afterwards, we watched as he squired a half-dozen hens up through a little hollow only 50 yards away. Bobby remained pretty clam, but Donna and I were both excited. I wished I had brought my camera along, but it seems that whenever I have it with me, I never see anything. At any rate, Rattlesnake Knob gave me another option during the season, though it is pretty close to roads and is probably hunted hard.

*April 10*—Decided Dad ought to see Rattlesnake Knob. On the way we saw a rarity in our area, an osprey, up on an old snag, eating a sucker. Last night's gobbler repeated his performance, pleasing Dad. He remarked that evening gobbling was common many years ago, when spring gobbler seasons began, but that it has been rare for the past ten or twelve years.

He also told me he had heard a couple of farm tour birds this morning and that they gobbled well. Boy, it must be nice to be retired.

*April 12*—The farm tour. I again failed to get the first gobbler in for a photo, and by the time we completed the circuit, the old boys had shut up for the day—mostly. They were out in the open, though. A jake in one little field was trying to impress a hen; she was totally ignoring him. Farther along a dandy longbeard was displaying brazenly for four ladies. I snapped a couple photos, but the birds were several hundred yards away, and I supposed they'd look like little black dots on the final photos. (They did.) But, for a change, we had remembered to bring binoculars along, so we got good looks at the birds.

*April 19*—Easter: just a super morning. Dad and I were going in the old road leading to Rocky Point for the first time this year when I spotted a turkey sitting in a tree. We halted, but the bird had seen us and flew off. Even so, as the sky lightened, we could see three more turkeys in trees above us, and two gobbled madly. All were jakes, with short, barely visible beards. How the experts tell jake gobblers from longbeard gobblers is beyond me. These young toms sounded good to me.

We learned another lesson, too. A lot of so-called double-gobbling is actually two toms sounding off together. As we watched the early roost gobbling, one gobbler would start almost immediately after the first one's gobble. In fact, I'd bet most double-gobbling is made by two birds.





**WHEN HE gobbled from the ground, five minutes later, I answered enthusiastically. He again gobbled. He was only 60 or 70 yards away, down over a little bank.**

*April 20*—The last day of my five-day Easter break. Dad and I took a pre-dawn hike, hoping to hear the gobblers far from the roads we had located earlier. They were still just about where they had been before. They went nuts gobbling at a brigade of crows just at sunrise, too. They certainly don't like crows. I decided to try for one of these on Saturday.

*April 25*—The first day of gobbler season and Donna's birthday. I took the big hike for the distant birds. Dad decided to try a secret spot he'd found. At 6:15 I heard one of the toms. I got set up, but he shut up real fast after my first call. Had I spooked him or did the wind shut him up? Another bird continued to gobble in the distance, so I took off after him, staying high on the ridge. He kept moving away, however, spoiling my plans.

Along about 8 o'clock I was shocked by lusty gobbling on top of the ridge. I set up on the other side of the tree I was sitting under and started to work on this new bird. There were two. One was to my right, the other off to my

left. They tantalized me for a half-hour, then abruptly shut up. I never got to see either, though they could not have been more than 50 yards away, over a little rise at the top of the ridge. They sounded good, too. Why had they shut up? About 15 minutes later I learned why. Two guys came crunching out the ridgetop above me. That got me discouraged, so after they passed I finished my thermos of coffee and tried to figure out what to do. The morning was now silent, except for little birds. I decided to stay put, and 20 minutes later I resumed calling. I called every 15 minutes for the next hour or more, but got zilch in return. I was extremely disappointed, especially because I was in a turkey drought, not having killed one for several years.

Dad's luck had been no better, I learned later. He hadn't heard a thing, and hunters were all over his area. So much for his secret spot.

*April 28*—Almost. I roosted a gobbler last night that I could get to before school today (I'm a teacher). He began to gobble before 5:45, and came off his

roost soon after. At 6:15 I was still getting nowhere with him, so I sneaked a hundred yards through a patch of laurel and dead oaks. After I renewed calling, the bird began to work toward me. At 6:45 I could see him, 70 yards away at the edge of some laurel. Then, all of a sudden, he vanished. Confused about what happened, I left for work. As I was gathering my gear, I spotted the reason for the gobbler's disappearance. Another hunter was sneaking along the same patch of laurel where I had seen the birds. I waved my blaze orange vest at him — I value my hide. Furthermore, it's those, I feel, who try sneaking in on a calling gobbler — which is illegal — that are more likely to imagine I look like a turkey. When the man saw my orange vest he disappeared as quickly as the gobbler had. I left kind of bitter. That was the fourth time that has happened to me in the past two years. And yes, I probably was a grump in school all day.

*May 1* — I didn't have to be at work till 9:00 today, so I tried the gobbler that I had worked on a couple days ago. Though I tried several flanking moves, I couldn't get him to budge. I reluctantly left the woods and its noisy gobbler, cacaphony of crows, and multitude of singing songbirds to attend a teacher workshop meeting. It was such a nice morning.

This evening Dad and I took the long hike to the distant gobblers, hoping to roost them. We managed to put one to bed. I elected to try for him in the morning; Dad decided to hunt one up.

*May 2* — I met Dad at the ridge at 4:45. After the first half-hour of the 45-minute walk, Dad and I split up. "Remember to get above the bird," he admonished me. "I'll see you at home at lunchtime." By 5:30 I was seated on a log, drinking coffee. I had finished the cup and was getting fidgety when the tom finally sounded off, probably less than a hundred yards away. We had pinpointed him pretty well the night before.

I moved a few yards to a large maple, got situated, and made my first series of yelps — very softly. The bird gobbled right back. I chose not to call again until I figured he was on the ground.

When he gobbled from the ground, five minutes later, I answered enthusiastically. He again gobbled. He was only 60 or 70 yards away, down over a little bank. When he came over the bank, looking for the hen, he would be less than 35 yards away. I remember thinking this was going to be too easy. I ought to know better.

We talked to each other for the next hour, but the gobbler refused to come up the bank, and I knew (from sad experience) better than to try to move toward him. I tried a variety of calls: soft yelps, clucks, several series of rapid yelps. None worked. The tom finally tired of this game and began to walk farther out the ridge, opposite the direction I had walked in. He kept gobbling, too. I knew I couldn't run him down, but I tried following him, and called to him when he gobbled in hopes I could get him to turn around. That lasted for an hour and a half. The bird kept right on going.

When he eventually crossed an old ridge field I knew I could not try to follow him, so I scrambled to the top of the ridge and established myself above the field. Meanwhile, the gobbler continued to taunt me, gobbling every three or four minutes. After I got myself settled again I decided to try a different caller. I propped my shotgun on my knees, put down my little friction caller and got out a diaphragm caller I have some confidence in. I yelped loud and long. "Gobble-obble-obble," thundered my adversary. For the next five minutes or so he wasn't quiet for more than 15 seconds at a time. He also was climbing the ridge, perhaps a hundred yards beyond me. I continued calling, varying lots of yelps with some clucks.

Then it started to rain and the gobbler went silent. No way was I going to leave, though. The rain lasted only several minutes before it slacked off. I



then made a series of yelps. The tom gobbled right back, and I finally saw him for the first time, sneaking around a deadfall about a hundred yards away.

He began to ease toward me. I called only once more, when he was out of sight in a shallow gully. I thought the hunt was about to end, but when the gobbler emerged from the gully, about 70 yards away, two deer ambled past him. Too many times I have seen deer spook turkeys. Now I was worried. These deer, however, didn't affect the tom. Heck, he gobbled at them. (At least it looked that way.)

At 50 yards I realized this was not a longbeard. I had told myself I was not going to settle for a tom with a little brush beard, the kind this bird sported.



In fact, only two years earlier I had passed up a jake only to miss his big brother. But thoughts of ending my drought won out. I decided to take him when he stepped into a little clearing only 25 yards away.

The bird stepped on a log only 30 yards from me and stood there for about ten years (actually, about a minute), looking for the now silent hen. When he stepped off the log the bead of my new 12-gauge was pointed at his

neck, just below his head. When he stepped into the opening my gun boomed.

Curt Warner couldn't have beaten me to the downed turkey. I had no intentions of letting him make a miraculous escape. But he wasn't going anywhere; my new shotgun had done its job well.

As I bent over and smoothed the feathers of my downed quarry, I experienced the familiar bittersweet feeling of success that overcomes hunters at moments such as this.

I checked my watch as I got ready to tag my turkey. It was nearly 9:30. The duel had lasted close to four hours. It had been a hard-earned tom, and he sure felt good as I toted him home. Though he may not have been the longbeard I had hoped for, he was nonetheless a trophy in my eyes. Tagging a gobbler is a real challenge for me, and I consider being able to bag any turkey as a special experience.

It was neat to have Donna and Bobby make a fuss over me at home, and it was kind of nice to be able to

WHEN HE stepped off the log the bead of my new 12-gauge was pointed right at his neck, just below his head. When he stepped into the opening my gun boomed.

brag to Dad when he arrived at the house, too.

*Postscript*—Dad pursued one specific gobbler all season, one that managed to elude him and quite a few other hunters. I nosed around a few more mornings and evenings, hoping to get that “gobbler photo of a lifetime,” but I didn't even come close.

But May 2 had already been the zenith of my gobbler season, a time Dad and I shared many fine mornings, enjoying the bountiful, beautiful wildlife in Penn's Woods.



Harriet J. W. H. H. H.

# Purple Martins Are Swallows

By Carsten Ahrens

*"The purple martin of America . . . is a favorite bird of Canada and the United States . . . Naturally breeding in hollow trees, it readily adapts to the nest boxes which are commonly set up for its accommodation . . . The male is a glossy steel-blue while the female is much duller above and beneath a brownish-gray."*

*. . . from "Encyclopaedia Britannica" 9th Edition (1898)*

**B**IRDS OCCUPIED this earth for millions of years before man came along, and after he did, they stayed at what they considered a safe distance from him. A few species, however, including purple martins, house wrens and robins, seemed to approve of him. It

wasn't his idea, though, it was theirs. A robin, for example, will build its nest on his windowsill or over his doorway. But only the martins choose to live in colonies near man, providing he makes it possible for them to do so.

## The Swallow Family

The swallow family includes some 80 species. They are so evenly distributed throughout the world that it's impossible to say for certain just where the family originated. They are not closely related to any other birds, even the swifts, with which they are often seen sharing the skies. Both the swallows and the swifts are surely air-oriented, spending most of the daylight hours in flight. If in doubt about identification, count the tail-feathers: swallows have 12; swifts, 10.



With a wingspread of 16 inches, the martin is North America's largest swallow.

In Pennsylvania we also find barn, bank, cliff, rough-winged, and tree swallows. Unlike the martins, as noted above, the sexes in these other swallows are alike in appearance. Tree swallows, like the martins, will accept man-made lodgings, but they are more likely to select natural cavities in which to nest. Bank swallows burrow into steep hill-sides, digging two or three feet into solid earth to avoid landslides. Rough-winged swallows are not excavators, but also nest in the ground. They find abandoned burrows made by other diggers or use crevices in cliffs. Nearby is an old limestone quarry where heaps of slag piled a half-century ago offer homes to hundreds of bank swallows. Oddly enough, every year finds a pair of kestrels nesting right in the midst of the bank swallow colony. Their presence, though, causes no panic among the birds; the sparrow hawks seem to go elsewhere for food. Barn swallows carry bills full of mud that they form into clay nests they plaster to inside beams or under outside eaves of farm buildings. Cliff swallows also are potters, but their nests are jug-like structures they anchor to rocks or to outside walls of buildings.

Martins, along with the bank, rough-winged, and tree swallows, have moderately notched tails; the cliff swallows have the feathers cut even; only the barn swallow wears the artistic, deeply-notched "swallowtail."

### Apartments Necessary

Martins must have nested in tree cavities before man came along. The literature says they occasionally still do. Once upon a time eastern America was one vast forest. Someone has observed that back then a Tarzan might have climbed a tree along the St. Lawrence River and then traveled to Louisiana without touching the ground. Whether that was the case or not, there unquestionably would have been ample dead trees for colonies of martins, and they probably were found along grassy areas bordering

For years beekeepers have castigated purple martins for snooping about their beehives and eating bees. They are disparaging the wrong bird. It's not the largest of swallows that snaps up the honeybees, but the largest of flycatchers—the kingbird. The birds are easily distinguished. A martin has a pleasant voice and a dark, notched tail. The kingbird has a harsh cry and an even-cut tail edged with a white band.

lakes, rivers and streams. Today, however, martins seem to demand man-made lodgings. Generations ago, early settlers visiting Indian villages noticed gourds with openings carved for admitting the birds were hung among the wigwams. Evidently an Indian ornithologist discovered, maybe eons ago, that a colony of martins kept his camp amazingly free of mosquitoes and black flies.

One spring I was unable to get my birdhouses in place before the birds returned from the South. The wrens complained loudly, but eventually settled in an old corn planter leaning against a shed. But when the martins found their mansion missing, they disappeared and the structure, replaced, remained empty.

There's no accounting for where purple martins will — and will not — take up housekeeping. I remember as a boy two farm neighbors who (I shouldn't, but will call martinets) lived two miles apart. One kept a well-groomed homestead, including a gleaming martin house that was a miniature reproduction of the owner's home. It never housed a martin. The other farmer had a most ramshackle sort of place, with a score of unpainted martin boxes on unsteady poles that seemed always ready to collapse. You've guessed it: every summer the air above them was full of martins and their singular music.

### Companionship

Some birds exhibit great togetherness except while nesting. Ducks, for example, migrate together, but leave the flock

in pairs to start families. Flocks reassemble when the breeding season concludes. The wild turkey hen hides her nest from the gobbler and other hens. But when her young can care for themselves, all rejoin. The togetherness of martins, however, is year round, in migration, while nesting and in the winter. Young martins must be the most pampered of all birds for all adult members of the flock offer to feed them. Although there is some evidence of a pecking order, in a martin colony there seems to be less aggressiveness and rivalry than among most other species of birds.

### Migration

Because martins are completely insectivorous and they spend their winters in far-off Brazil, their travels between summer and winter homes present many problems. Most birds pause to eat weed seeds, grains, and fruit as they migrate. Bobolinks, like martins, also migrate to Brazil, but along the way they grow plump on grains, especially rice. Because of their insectivorous diet, martins must leave their nesting areas early, often by mid-August, before frost inactivates their food supply. Conversely, they must move slowly when they fly north the next spring. Should they arrive during a cold rainy spell, with no insects on the wing, tragedy would result.

Martins nest across southern Canada and in all our contiguous states. Male scouts come first, then more males followed by females. They lose no time in getting a nest underway, which could be from mid-April through mid-June, depending upon the weather. The nest may be meagerly or abundantly furnished. Sometimes a barrier of mud is added to block the doorway. During the Iranian hostage crisis, yellow ribbons speckled our landscape. I noticed quite a few were added to martin nests. From four to six white unspotted eggs are laid. They hatch in two weeks and the naked young soon develop feathers and resemble the mother. They remain in the nest up to a month, much longer than other song-

birds, and they spend their time at the opening, waiting for parents to bring them food.

One August I vacationed in a cottage on the edge of a lake. About 100 feet from shore was a 20-room martin house atop a pipe that stood 20 feet above water. It was the center for 30 or 40 martins, oldsters and youngsters. The birds, as many as could, would crowd on the roof and tiny porch of the house while the rest swept in circles overhead. Those that had rested a bit took to the air and their places were taken by those flying. It seemed like a game of musical chairs, for the activity was always optimistic and agreeable to the ear—at least to mine. We watched them often with binoculars, and though at first they all seemed alike, we soon were able to distinguish individual differences. We timed their activities. After about 15 minutes at the house, the birds would leave for a flight around the lake, returning in about 45 minutes for another quarter hour of rest. We enjoyed watching them snatch insects from the air and drink by opening their beaks while skimming the water. Suddenly one day the birds were gone for the summer. Flocks from farther north stopped on following days, though, for rest, food, drink, and conversation at the lake birdhouse.

### More Birdhouses Needed

Early in this century, towns—especially in New England—tried to outdo each other in terms of the numbers of martin colonies they could sustain. That was before the introductions of English sparrows and starlings. These two immigrants liked the same nesting sites as the martins. Furthermore, as those two are nonmigratory and more pugnacious, they often took over the martin sites in the winter and were well ensconced when the martins returned in the spring. Martins have greatly decreased in numbers, but if we raise more housing projects for them, and help them against the pirates, they could again be treats for eyes and ears.



# A Jake for the Old Man

By David R. Thompson

**I**T SEEMS good turkey hunters, those who regularly shoot a gobbler in the spring, don't regard a young gobbler, a jake, as much of a trophy. It's more satisfying for them to hunt a boss gobbler. The very name, "boss" gobbler, conjures up an image of a heavy turkey sporting a long beard, long spurs, a beautifully fanned tail, and voicing a domineering gobble. That is a real trophy.

It may seem strange, therefore, that after almost 20 years of searching for a boss gobbler, a jake remains my most memorable turkey. And I wasn't the hunter who shot it. My son did, a few days after he turned 16.

## One Gray Squirrel

Bridger and his older brother Erik began accompanying me on spring gobbler hunts before they were old enough to hunt. What I knew then about hunting turkeys was what I'd read or heard by listening to experienced hunters who seemed to know whether to yelp, cluck, cut, purr or even gobble in order to call in a spring gobbler. I, on the other hand, could boast of calling in one gray squirrel (I still insist it was my kee-kee calls that brought it to me) and a doe. The gobblers showed absolutely no interest in my calls. Consequently, even though the boys and I enjoyed exciting moments in the woods, I was unable to coax a gobbler into shotgun range.

Slowly, year by year and book by book and hunt by hunt, I began to better understand turkey hunting. I started to find gobblers and call them

at least close enough to see. Once, during buck season, when the younger son and I sat hidden in a depression, I took my box caller out of my coat pocket and yelped with it. I then returned it to my pocket and we concentrated on watching for deer. Twenty minutes later, when we stood up, a turkey that had sneaked in undetected flew away. It was the first turkey I'd ever called in and it made me quite proud.

"Yessir, I called in that bird with no problem," I told the boy who was equally amazed that we had actually seen a turkey at 20 yards. As we tramped out of the woods that late December afternoon, I described with great detail the simple 4-yelp calling technique I'd used and explained why I thought the turkey had responded.



**THE YEARS** of practice, with Dad's expert guidance, finally paid off when Bridger dropped his first gobbler, a Perry County jake.

Thinking back, I may have sounded like more of an expert than was justified.

By the time the boys were old enough to have hunting licenses, they could call turkeys as well if not better than their father. But I never admitted it. With his own voice the younger boy could yelp and gobble realistically enough to bring in turkeys. When we hunted, however, I did the calling because I was the one, remember, who had called in the turkey during buck season. I pointed out that I was the best caller among the three of us, and that if we were to get any shots, I should call. That worked for two years, but when no gobblers came to us the boys began to doubt my self-appointed position as master caller. The pressure they put on me to allow them to call was intense. I gave in.

“You guys have to learn this calling business like I did, the hard way,” I said. “Go ahead and try—I’ll tell you what you do wrong.” I was always relieved when no turkeys came to their calls. Not that I would have been envious of my own sons—I could have claimed I had taught them everything they knew about calling turkeys.

They accompanied me every Satur-

day morning for three springs, and not once did we see a gobbler. And when I hunted alone during the week and called in a gobbler, they dubiously question me about the details. It was as if I had a credibility problem.

“If you saw a gobbler on Buck Ridge on Monday morning, how come he wasn’t there on Saturday when we were there?” they’d ask.

Well, every turkey hunter knows that gobblers don’t always talk. “He probably was spooked or maybe another hunter was working on him. You have to be there at the right time, and Saturday wasn’t it,” I explained.

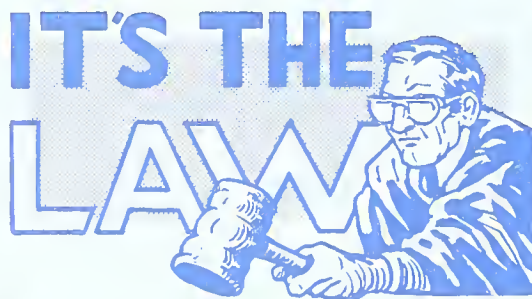
### Hunt Alone

The next year the older boy was 16 and, although I still can’t understand why he thought his chances were better without me, he decided to hunt alone.

He went up on Pisgah Ridge, to a place he had scouted and heard gobblers. The younger boy, 15, had no choice but to accompany the master. He made it clear, however, that he would set up in a place as far from me as legally permitted. Once I overheard him tell a friend he couldn’t wait until he was 16 so he could hunt his own gobbler.

Opening day found us on Mt. Dempsey. As usual, I did the calling. Just as usual, no turkey responded. At 8 o’clock we hiked to a different area and positioned ourselves, with our backs against trees, for yet another attempt. Long ago I had trained myself not to take turkey hunting so seriously that my appetite, my concentration at work, and my temperament were affected. I learned, instead, to enjoy the budding leaves, the singing birds, the antics of pairing crows, and the meanderings of centipedes on the forest floor. I had tried to teach the boys to enjoy nature, too, yet they preferred to concentrate on getting a gobbler. Centipedes weren’t the challenge they sought.

I looked at the boy and motioned for him to pull down his face mask. Then I picked up my striker and stroked it



#### Question

Are box traps or live traps legal to use during the trapping season?

#### Answer

Yes, providing each trap is capable of catching only one furbearer at a time. Traps capable of multiple catches, colony traps, are not legal.



gently four times on the Super Hen caller. Five minutes later I was shocked to see directly ahead of us, about a hundred yards away, a black object moving in our direction. At first I believed it was a black bear, even though bears are rarely seen in Perry County. No, it had to be a turkey.

The gobbler approached until he was within shooting range for my son, who was sitting in front of me and to the right. But he didn't shoot. When the turkey disappeared behind a tree, I raised my gun into shooting position. Something, however, alarmed the bird and he took a short run and flew.

The boy explained that at first he was afraid to raise his shotgun and risk being seen by the turkey. When he finally did raise the double barrel, the gobbler was suspicious. "I saw him coming in the entire time. I saw the beard on him, his red head and the wattles, everything," the lad said. "Say, do your eyes get blurry when you see a turkey?" he asked.

That was the only turkey we saw while hunting together that season. Yet a milestone had been reached. My confidence as a turkey hunter grew.

The next spring the younger boy was 16. He offered to help me, pointing out that his hearing was keen and mine was poor. My performance as a caller the previous spring had made an impression on him, though, so he agreed that we'd begin hunting with me calling.

The dawn of opening day was quiet. I called without coaxing a response. I was disappointed because I had scouted the area and knew gobblers were there. Had I lost my touch?

We hiked to the top of a powerline and enjoyed the view. We then reentered the woods at the ridge top and had walked only 50 yards or so when we heard a gobble. And it was close.

The boy set up in front of a tree and I

hid behind a log. I yelped four times. Two minutes later the gobbler was running toward us. Every time he took a stride his neck stretched forward, reminding me of a racehorse on the homestretch. He moved past the boy, who didn't shoot, and was coming toward me. When he was 40 yards away, I did something really stupid. I moved. If there's one thing a turkey hunter must not do, it's move. As soon as I did, the gobbler sailed away.

### Moving Too Much

"I was waiting for him to stop," my son explained, "so I'd have a shot at his head. His head was moving too much. Man, he was sure a nice gobbler. Did you see that beard and hear him cluck while he was coming in? That was something."

We were paying the price of inexperience. And one week later, we paid some more. One evening we spotted a turkey in a field and knew that it, and perhaps some other birds as well, would roost nearby. The next morning we donned hip boots, waded a creek



"AS SOON as the head came up, I shot. He went right down," Bridger said. We inspected the gobbler's stubby beard and spurs. They were perfectly formed. It was every bit a trophy to us.



and crept into a stand of hemlocks where we guessed the turkey had roosted. We were late. The sky already was becoming light as we tiptoed in. We heard and then saw the turkey as it flapped away. I was disgusted with myself for walking into the pines. I should have called from the edge, where we would not have been seen. In all encounters, the turkeys had demonstrated their superiority.

After spooking the roosting turkey, I concentrated on less demanding activities—looking for mushrooms, for example. We hunted to the ridge top, stopping to call at places that looked promising. The boy was calling more often now, giving me more time to study spiders and chipmunks. When we arrived at a familiar stone wall, we crossed it and sat in a place that had little underbrush and afforded a clear view. I took out my caller and yelped three times. A nice centipede appeared on a nearby log.

There was a muted sound to my left—one that reminded me of a cluck. I listened intently. The boy was to my right. Suddenly, a shot rang out. Some hunter had slipped in and shot a bird practically in our laps, I thought. But when I looked toward the boy I realized that it was he who had shot. I jumped up and headed after him. It was obvious why he was hurrying; a turkey was down.

It was a young gobbler, a jake. He was coming in from behind and to the right when the boy heard it walking. He waited until the turkey stepped behind a log. When its head was down he lifted the shotgun. "As soon as the head came up, I shot. He went right down," Bridger said.

We inspected the gobbler's stubby beard and spurs. They were perfectly formed. We fanned the bird's tail. It rivaled that of any boss. We hefted the turkey. It had filled out well in 12 months. It was every bit a trophy to us.

The boy hoisted the bird over his shoulder and we walked a short distance before Bridger remembered the turkey hadn't been tagged. When I'm calm I don't forget to tag game. This gobbler, however, was the first one to come in to my calls and not leave. Anyway, Bridger tagged it. The boy was justifiably proud of how he handled the turkey. I was standing taller, too. I hadn't pulled the trigger, but it didn't matter. You see, this turkey was also a jake for the old man.

### Cover Painting by Bob Sopchick

Getting up early, driving to the mountains, hiking into a remote location, and then nestling in at the base of a tree or boulder, all long before the sun's first rays start highlighting the eastern horizon, may seem more like a dreaded chore than a leisure activity, but such a regimen becomes an almost daily routine for the state's quarter million or so turkey hunters. Just experiencing the sights, sounds and smells of spring are reasons enough to be afield at this time, but the thrill one gets when a wary gobbler seems to be investigating his calls is what keeps hunters getting up early, driving long distances, and making long hikes in the dark, day after day after day. If you've yet to experience the particular joys of spring turkey hunting, consider giving it a try this year. But beware; spring turkey hunting can be habit forming.





I WAS heading for an old logging road and a special stump that stood beside it. That weathered abbreviation of what had once been a towering oak was about three feet tall and level-cut on top to form a platform about two feet in diameter.

## Low Down On A Stump

By Paul Carson

THERE WERE four years of bow-hunting strung down my backtrail that afternoon. And as I hurried toward what I hoped would be a change of luck, my mind kept jabbing me with the depressing reminder that those had been scoreless years.

Maybe it's like high school or college, I consoled myself, trying to move silently through a carpet of cornflake-brittle leaves. You go through four years of learning and tests, then comes graduation. So let this be graduation, I panted, while my aching legs throbbed with sympathy pains for my burning lungs.

I had just trotted a mile through a Washington County sidehill pasture, then into the woods, up over a ridge and halfway down the other slope, which ran on down to Buffalo Creek.

I was heading for an old logging

road and a special stump that stood beside it. That weathered abbreviation of what had once been a towering oak was about three feet tall and level-cut on top to form a platform about two feet in diameter. Upon reaching the stump, I hauled myself aboard and unlimbered a fiberglass shaft from my bow quiver. My hunting partner Dave Budinger would soon be driving what we had come to call the Killer Briar Patch, the piece of cover I had just jogged around.

There was nothing I could do now but wait. I tried not to think about our experiences of recent years. After all, no matter how ripsnorting some of our hunts of the last four years had been, we still hadn't gotten a deer with a bow. And this was literally the last afternoon of the last day of regular bow season.

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## GAME NEWS

For a Friend . . .

From atop my stump, I got a splendid view of why I was there. Beyond the hollow created by a small run that gurgled down to Buffalo Creek was an abandoned meadow where clusters of crabapple saplings conspired with bramble thickets to choke a shrinking number of open spaces. The old logging road came out of this tangle and crossed the hollow on its way deeper into the woodlot.

Dave and I had named the thicket of briars and crabapples following our first few encounters with the place when it did its best to rip our pants and legs from under us.

Knowledge of the byways of the briar patch was only part of what we discovered over our years of bowhunting. But unless we could successfully put what we knew to work, very soon another year was going to slip into the scoreless column.

As I imagined Dave starting his assault on the briar patch, I crossed my fingers and remembered a dreary day in the little western Pennsylvania town of Washington, where we both work. That day had been the beginning of all this.

Buck season had just closed, and the thought of no more deer hunting was extremely depressing. We were loafing in a sporting goods store during lunch hour when it dawned on us that the medicine we needed was right there in the archery display.

For the next three years we dabbled in bowhunting, sandwiching both practice and hunts between work and family responsibilities.

We learned. And we had fun doing it. But the feelings grew that we weren't successful because we weren't totally committed. As Dave put it,

"We haven't suffered enough to deserve a buck." He came up with this observation despite hunting in downpours in regular seasons and blizzards in the extended season. And after our first few outings in cold rains and other hostile weather, we weren't going to settle for a doe.

So, in that fourth year we planned a week's vacation for the last of October.

Through the summer we jogged and played racquetball to get into shape and we practiced shooting every minute we could spare. But in practicing we believed that if we prepared for the longest shots we planned to take, anything closer would be a cinch. That bit of fuzzy thinking came home to haunt us, especially Dave.

Finally, the week arrived. And we hunted, for the most part in glorious weather. We tried the stump stand a couple of times but routed no deer from the Killer Briar Patch. During the week, however, Dave encountered three bucks in another wooded hollow.

When I came up to him after driving a piece of cover, he started windmilling his arms and launched into his tale. "There I was," he said, almost choking on disbelief. "I've hardly ever seen a buck in four years and there, all of a sudden, were three of 'em."

The three deer had materialized out of some grapevine tangles and, from very up close and personal, they gazed with mild curiosity as Dave flung arrows at them.

All but one of the shots sailed over the bucks' backs. The exception went between the antlers of the largest deer, a 6-point.

"They just wouldn't run," Dave kept muttering. "I can't believe it." The bucks finally ambled off, apparently after losing interest in Dave's strange behavior. His longest shot in the encounter had been about 40 feet.

The next day as we were eating lunch at my home, the mail arrived with GAME NEWS, and we took time out to scan it.

Keith Schuyler's column that



month was about missing shots from uphill, downhill and close in, and why it happens.

"Where was he when I needed him?" Dave sighed.

I played the advice of that column, which seemed to most directly apply to us, over and over in my mind as we continued hunting—hold low, hold low.

And now it was the last afternoon of the regular season and I was perched on my stump while Dave was out there moving through the Killer Briar Patch.

Movement? There was certainly something out there moving. At first I had the impression four slim crab-apple saplings had slipped their moorings and were trotting toward the woods. Then a body appeared above the legs as the deer cleared the brush and, momentarily, the golden sun of October ricocheted off a set of antlers.

For a second a hot shroud of buck fever settled on me. But I told myself that was something I couldn't afford, and miraculously the beginnings of the familiar trembling stopped. I was cool. By gosh, I was cold.

The buck came down the logging road to the bottom of the hollow, paused, and then made a flowing leap of the little run and started up toward me. He was in no hurry. Apparently having moved out of his bed long before Dave reached him, he wasn't a bit alarmed.

The buck didn't seem inclined to stop his ambling trot as he neared my stump, so I hissed at him. I was perhaps ten feet above him, counting the height of the stump and the drop of the slope. He was about twenty feet from the stump when he stopped to investigate the noise, his rack swinging and glinting in the sun as he moved his head. I automatically counted his points—6.

**I FORCED myself to lower my aim and then lower it even more. That low enough, turkey? I remember asking myself as I let fly. I couldn't believe my eyes—the arrow still went high.**

I had brought my 45-pound recurve bow to full draw without him being aware I was there. I forced myself to lower my aim and then lower it even more.

That low enough, turkey? I remember asking myself as I let fly.

I couldn't believe my eyes. For one awful moment I imagined us tracking that deer into the next county—for the arrow still went into him high.

Then the buck tried to take a step and it was all over; he went down as if hit between the ears with a 2x4.

We discovered later the broadhead had hit him in the spine. So, after four years of ice, snow and rain, tired legs and aching feet, it was all suddenly very, very worthwhile.

When Dave finally clawed his way out of the briars, he was as excited as I was, for it had been a team effort.

We've decided—maybe after we're finished, hopefully years from now—to have the stump bronzed. And perhaps it would be fitting at that time to have something appropriate inscribed upon it. Such as: "Remember, turkey, keep 'em low!"









# Ramblings of a Woods Walker

By Al Shimmel

## The Mountain

**I**F AN individual who has grown up in the shadow of the hills spends any length of time in the flat lands, he will soon find his eyes searching the far horizons for the familiar sight of the hills.

Hills and mountains have individual personalities and, like humans, no two are alike. It is small wonder then that those who live among them have their favorites.

In that respect I am no different from others. One mountain I consider mine. Not that I own it, but because I have so many pleasant recollections centered around it. Its point is bounded on three sides by a small river and its tributary. It has a common name but I prefer to think of it by the more descriptive Indian appellation, "The River of the Wild Plums."

The climb from the river to the point is steep enough to test the fitness of any who dares to try. I was following hounds on a coon trail when, as a youth, I discovered the summit. In later years I learned to enjoy the solitude it provided when I rested beside the huge stone marking the pinnacle. It stands above its surroundings, and the only way to enjoy its peace is by personal effort. There's no easy access to the top.

Tradition says the huge stone was a lookout from which Indians kept watch over the river. Diagonally across the river, on another mountain, a clump of pines and an ancient lilac bush shade the grave of an Indian squaw. The headstone is on the down-river side of the grave, which is in accordance with their custom of burying the dead so they face the sunrise. Even though she married a white man, her burial respected the customs of her people.

Below the summit stone a game trail

can be observed. At those times when the oaks on the highlands bear a good crop of acorns a variety of game can be seen.

## Hemlock — the state tree

The slope to the west of the point follows a long curve of the river. Found there is a small sphagnum bog that nourishes a bed of wild cranberries. In late September I visit the area to harvest some. I take only enough for Thanksgiving and Christmas sauce, leaving plenty for my woodland neighbors.

At the edge of the bog a tangle of rhododendron and hemlock climbs the mountain until it reaches the scanty hardwoods that grow among the boulders tossed by some ancient convulsion. Somehow, a giant hemlock finds moisture, sustenance and secure anchorage among them. About its feet, stunted oaks, dwarfed and grotesque, creep as if seeking protection from the giant. The scars of lightning mark its flanks because it dares to stand above its fellows, defying the elements.

The snows of many winters have bent, broken and twisted its branches, making them a harp on which winter winds shriek loud and defiant battle cries. Gentler summer breezes sing soft and soothing lullabies. The winds have dwarfed its branches on one side, but they haven't kept it from proudly thrusting its crown toward the sky.

Its youth returns each spring when golden tips change to darker green, clothing all its boughs. Others of its kind grow farther down the mountain-side, stately pyramids of green in which birds of countless varieties find shaded nesting sites. Rhododendrons form tangles underneath.

The ancient hemlock epitomizes wildness. Tall and stately in its dignity, it lives apart from man as if afraid he

would seek to tame it, making it a shadow of its former self.

I sit in solitude beneath the stately giant and let its magic do its work. It conjurs up the past.

Among the mental images is a grassy knoll beside a mountain stream, with



stately hemlocks just beyond. A tent stands by the finest pool. Inside, a bed of hemlock boughs. Outside, a bed of glowing coals where brook trout change to golden brown. Firelight brightens the faces of three boys, excited by their first adventure without an adult. They learned a self-reliance born of simple skills.

Their ears were tuned to the hermit thrush's melodic twilight vespers and to the murmuring brook that fed the pool. From fragrant beds they watched the glowing coals winking in the fading light and listened to the whip-poor-will's goodnight. Wood smoke is the incense that sets them dreaming of a distant past they never knew.

Theirs is a bright morning when trout dart from dark hides to strike the

artless lure. Below the pool, a bar of sand, bright with the sun, lures the hen grouse with her brood to gather grit. Not far away a spring bubbles through white sands where deer come down to drink. The overflow wanders through a green monotony of fern where purple fringed orchids grow. Along the stream bright spikes of cardinal flowers and bee balm lure the hummingbird to test their sweets.

In early days only the hemlock's bark was valued. The spars were left where they were stripped, to rot or feed the fires that sometimes followed a slashing. Later the spars were found to make excellent framing timbers. I recently saw a new home where the trim was made entirely of polished hemlock. It was beautiful.

**ITS YOUTH** returns each spring when golden tips change to darker green, clothing all its boughs. Others of its kind grow farther down the mountainside.

Peeling bark was a seasonal occupation that required great skill. It was practical only from late spring until late summer, when the bark no longer slipped free. The fellers came to the woods, cut the trees and swamped (cut the branches free) the trunk. Some swampers called hemlock "devils pine" because the hardness of the knots ruined many an ax blade. The peeler had two specialized tools, a peeling ax and a spud. The ax had a wide thin blade with a thin sharp heel. The spud had a small heavy spade-shaped blade with a short heavy handle. It was used to pry the bark from the log.

After the spar was felled and swamped, the peeler cut a narrow strip of bark from the top of the log. This was done by pulling the heel along the top of the spar with a sliding motion, keeping the helve almost parallel with the spar. The spar was then ringed every four feet. Pieces of bark were pried loose with the spud and then piled to dry. The scaler measured the stacks and paid the peeler by the cord (4x4x8 feet).



In late summer the bark was loaded on sledges and hauled from the woods. Loading bark was not without hazards. The loosely stacked bark had many crevices that were ideal homes for small rodents. Those, in turn, attracted timber rattlers, which found both shelter and larder in the bark piles.

It was not at all uncommon for loaders lifting pieces of bark to find a heart-shape head poised above sinister coils and whirring bells. An ax or stick usually brought the encounter to an end. Rattles were often removed, displayed in camp, and then carried in the pocket as an amulet against future encounters.

Occasionally, though, the snake struck first. That called for heroic measures, consisting of crude surgery to open the wounds and then a thorough cleansing with considerable quantities of whiskey, applied both externally and internally. Even to this day that procedure is known in outdoor circles as "snakebite cure". Most of the victims survived the treatment, but due more to their strong constitutions than the practice.

At best, hemlock is a poor fuel. It burns brightly but gives little heat. It is a noisy fuel, too, and throws off long burning embers that are a constant danger to campers. Hemlock bark is a better fuel and is often used for a luncheon fire. Indians prized the hemlock's inner bark as a source of pink dye to color their porcupine quill embroidery. Pioneer women learned the secret from them and used it to color their home-woven linen.

When snow and cold winds sweep down from the Arctic and lock their icy grip on the mountains, valley hemlocks become havens for wild creatures. Deer leave the ridges for the windproof shelter and pantry. Although hemlock is not the best forage, it provides enough nourishment to tide them through winter storms, grouse find in them protective cover from the horned owl and fierce goshawk's talons. Porcupine cut the tender tips but drop many

of them to the ground where deer and other creatures utilize them.

In late winter, after the cones have matured, hemlock seeds sustain both winter and transient birds from the north. When Canadian spruce forests fail to produce a crop of cones, many birds migrate south to seek the hemlock as a substitute. Evening grosbeaks, redpolls, crossbills and siskins stream south to compete with chickadees and red squirrels for the harvest. The snow beneath the trees is littered with seeds. Some go overlooked, and with the melting snows and moderating temperatures, create a myriad of seedlings to form a plush green carpet.

The feathered visitors from the north show little fear. They even may occasionally be persuaded to compete with the tame chickadees for seeds held in the hands of winter hikers. The subdued light of the hemlock groves is akin to their summer habitat, where man is the exception rather than the rule. They are prone to accept the casual visitor as a part of the winter landscape.

### With Care

The hemlock does not take kindly to domestication. With care, though, it can be grown from seed. If the required environmental factors of moisture, shade, temperature and soil acidity are achieved, the hemlock will respond. Closely planted hemlock hedges and windbreaks require minimum care. Songbirds make use of them for winter protection and summer nesting sites. And when the light green pendants of new growth adorn the hemlock, its beauty is spectacular.

The woods walker senses the mystery of the hemlock's shade when he crushes a few needles and inhales its fragrance. He draws from it the mystic charm of childhood that renews body, mind and spirit.

The calendar says autumn is here, and with the restlessness that comes with the season, I climb the point again to search the tributary for signs of the changing season. A faint color in



FOR WILDLIFE the chestnut tree furnished not only food but, for those who preferred a comfortable and secure hollow, it also became a home. Ancient chestnuts were the end of a quest.

the lowlands gives promise of things to come.

There are three pockets of woodcock cover along the smaller stream. When the moon is full in October I begin watching for reports of storms along the Canadian border. They will fill those coverts with migrant birds. Under those conditions Britt and I will have a field day.

Across the valley, my eye is aware of bleached skeletons, all that remains of the giant chestnuts of yesteryear.

In this modern world I sometimes hear praise for the "good old days". I wonder how many would really exchange modern conveniences for the rugged life of the past. Yet there is something I regret.

### The Vanishing American

Every year, when the frosts burn the leaves with their fire, this countryboy of yesteryear, now a graying great-grandfather, experiences a nostalgia for the woods and country lanes of his boyhood.

It began as competition between the boy and the woodland creatures for the

richest treasure of the woods. Rich treasure it must have been, to be locked away in a velvet-lined jewel box, guarded by a thousand spears. Only the magic fingers of the frost held the key that could set the treasure free. Once free it became available to all to take as much or as little as they desired.

To the countryboy it meant the means to acquire copper-toed boots, a box of 22 shorts (15 cents at the local store), or a few steel traps. It was wealth, there for his gathering.

The secret of its magnetic power was its flavor, sustaining power, and the nourishment it provided. To the wild things it was the season of Nature's cornucopia. Deer, bear, squirrels, turkey and grouse feasted to repletion, and stored energy and fat against the famine times to come. Even the noisy jays were busy filling knotholes and cranies with the manna of the woods.

The lane that led from the barn to the public road was flanked on both sides by 6-rail fences, split many years before from the straight chestnut trees that grew in the timber lot. Years had weathered the wood into soft neutral colors. They blended nicely with the huge chestnut trees that grew in the fence corners and made a green tunnel of shade during the summer. Before the frost touched the pods a venturesome red squirrel cut a few and labored diligently to extract a few nuts. The country boy willingly gathered what remained after the squirrel had given up in disgust. He rolled them between two flat fieldstones and, in spite of pricked fingers, tested the new crop with the delight of a seasoned gourmet.

Later, after the burrs had split open, he gathered an amount that would feed a dozen squirrels through the winter months. It was the ready market for chestnuts that fired his dreams of financial independence. The keeper



of the country store paid the standard price of fifty cents a bushel, but in the county seat, a town at some distance, the price might be a silver dollar.

There was considerable difference in the size and quality of the nuts produced by different trees. The larger nuts lacked the sweet flavor found in some of the smaller ones. The country boy knew these select trees and gathered their nuts for home consumption. They were stored in bags hung from attic rafters and used in the fillings for Thanksgiving and Christmas turkeys. They were boiled and roasted in the winter, and with apples made a satisfying and wholesome snack. Others more perfect in size were sold to city dwellers.

Chestnuts were the lure that drew the gray squirrels from the woods to the rail fences. The boy with his box of 22 shorts found it easy to gather the raw material for a squirrel potpie. He sorted his kill, careful to keep the young tender animals for pan frying.

Between the time the burrs began to open until all the nuts had dropped, the young people of the community had "chestnut frolics." That was one of the rural social functions that was anticipated and regularly attended. Young people took to the woods, with the strongest young man carrying the heaviest post mall that could be found. The smaller trees that bore their nuts high in the crowns were struck several blows with the sledge, sending down showers of nuts, burrs and dead branches. There was much dodging, screaming and rough hilarity as the nuts were gathered in pockets and pouches. The couple having the great-

est store was declared the winner and became the object of much good-natured banter. Jays and squirrels scolded the noisy crowd, for what they considered the pilfering of their rightful property. Such protest, however, went unheeded in the pleasures and companionship of the hour.

For wildlife the chestnut tree furnished not only food but, for those who preferred a comfortable and secure hollow, it also became a home. Ancient chestnuts were the end of a quest. Raccoons loved the high secure hollows, the horned owl nested here, and even the wild bee found a dry hollow a secure storage vault for the condensed sweetness gathered from field and woods.

The chestnut had other claims of respect from the countrymen. For the farmer it provided easily split rails to fence his acres. Posts from its wood were durable in contact with the soil and weather. Shakes split from seasoned blocks made a long lasting roof for house and barn. Slabs split from chestnut gave shelter to woodsman and trapper and kindled their campfires. Chestnut sprouts were prized by country boys for making bark whistles.

Then the deadly chestnut blight took its toll. Today, only the bleached skeletons of once proud giants remain. Occasionally saplings will emerge from still living roots, but only a few survive to bear fruit. They struggle for existence and might grow to a few inches in diameter. There is hope, however. Some day the blight may be conquered, and in some distant day the once beloved and abundant "King of the Woods" may return.

## Thoughts While Walking

*A land ethic changes the role of Homo sapiens from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it. It implies respect for its fellow members, and also for the respect of the community as such. A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.*

— Aldo Leopold  
*The Land Ethic*



**"HE'S COMING DOWN,"** Greg cautioned. We were both eager to see the bird come down on its own. It's rare to even find a turkey on its roost, let alone see it leave unspooked.

## Out on a Limb

By Tom Betts

**M**Y FRIENDS constantly complain about the seemingly endless supply of turkey stories I have ready for any and every opportunity. "Not another one," they groan.

Most of the stories are true, though. I determined long ago that accurate, unembellished accounts are easier to relate and, usually, more fun. I also have found it pays to freshen the stock with vivid impressions of recent episodes just, if for no other reason, to keep complaints to a tolerable level. For example, an incident that occurred last spring definitely deserves a place in my repertoire. No one will complain about *this* story.

May was in the air and the turkey season had just reached the end of the first week. My time in the woods had been spent with my Olympus OM-1,

but so far I had not managed even a single photograph. A friend from high school days, just returned to the area, had been enjoying more luck.

Quite by chance, he located a gobbler on Saturday, but was not able to bring the bird to the gun. He was, however, determined to call in the bird — a longbeard, he thought — and I wanted some pictures; so Gregg Rinkus and I planned a Monday hunt.

We planned to be in the area by 5:15 so we would have ample time to locate the bird from its gobble and then get into position. Each of us was going to call, in hopes of sounding like the two hens Gregg had seen there. We hoped the bird would come in close, allowing me to snap off picture after picture. It all seemed so easy. "Think turkeys," said Gregg, "and we'll see turkeys."

Monday found me at Gregg's house



IN A SHORT while we tried a few soft clucks and an assortment of other turkey language. Greg even gave his near perfect rendition of a barred owl. It didn't budge.

promptly at 5 o'clock. He was waiting for me and ten minutes later, in total darkness, we arrived at the trail that would lead us to the upper end of a small valley of mixed hardwoods and pines.

Our travel was hampered a bit by the steady drizzle which had been falling all night, but it did make for quiet passage—for that we were thankful. But the rain was very cold and when by 5:30 we had heard only one distant gobble, our enthusiasm had dampened.

Fifteen minutes later, with still no sound from the bird we were after, I suggested we move on up the path, out to a point between two small ravines where we could overlook a large valley. I was certain we would hear him from there.

Suddenly, I froze! I seized Gregg by the back of his flannel shirt and stopped him abruptly.

"Look up there," I said, pointing. "There he is."

Perfectly motionless, out of the corner of his mouth, Gregg responded, "That's got to be the old longbeard."

There we stood, completely out in the open, peering through the heavy fog and mist at one of nature's most wary creatures. It was about 40 feet up in a big black oak, only 60 yards away. We stared in amazement at the black spot silhouetted against a pale gray background.

Just as we were beginning to wonder whether this could be our turkey and how we could be so lucky, the big bird appeared to stretch out his neck, unfold its wings slightly, and shake off all the water that had drenched it through the night.

The rain started up again.

Now convinced, we gingerly backed up several strides and eased off the trail into some brush. Our movements were well-concealed, we thought, by the



low light conditions which still prevailed.

A little rustling sounded from the perch.

"He's coming down," Gregg cautioned. "Get ready."

We were both eager to see the bird come down on its own. It's rare to even find a turkey on its roost, let alone see it leave unspooked.

But all movement quickly ceased.

In a short while we tried a few soft clucks and an assortment of other turkey language. Gregg even gave his near perfect rendition of a barred owl. It didn't budge.

### Beard Hanging Down

I thought I could make out a beard hanging down and Gregg did, too. "What a bird," he whispered. "That's old longbeard, for sure." What had us baffled was the odd behavior we were observing. Excited about the education we were sure to receive on this particular morning, we carried on a quiet dialogue.

"I've heard of birds staying on roost until 10 o'clock, or so," Gregg pointed out. "But I've never witnessed it, and I'm not staying around that long."

"I can't believe he won't gobble, not



even once,” I replied. “We’ve tried every call, everything that’s worked for years.” And we had. We had tried owl calls and crow calls, soft tree calls, and clucks, yelps, and cackles.

“You don’t suppose it could be a hen, do you,” I questioned. “Or maybe a hawk or an owl. I’ve never seen an old gobbler resist the cackle. What could be wrong?”

Gregg, with a chuckle, answered, “I’ll tell you what’s wrong. He’s too old. He can’t gobble. He can’t even see or hear us. And when he does come down out of that tree, he’s not going to fly down, he’s going to fall.”

I couldn’t rule out the possibility.

### Some Movement

The daylight hour of 6:30 came and went. Every fifteen minutes or so we would detect some movement, a slight change in position, and then all would be quiet. We imagined the bird waking up from time to time, shaking the water off, and then, recognizing what a miserable day it was, going right back to sleep.

It was quite a bit brighter by now, and the rain had just about quit. We could see better, and were sure the bird could, too. So we sat like stones, perfectly still, and very cold, wet, and hungry.

“I say we move in if he’s still there at 7:15,” Gregg suggested.

“Fine by me.” I was anxious for a change.

At 7:15 the bird moved just enough to keep our curiosity piqued. We decided to wait it out another half-hour.

The bird continued to reject our

calls, even though we gave him a smorgasbord selection. I yelped and purred on my mouth call. I even cackled four times in a row! Gregg echoed my calls with his mouth call, which was a bit more raspy, and he hooted and crowed from time to time. I answered the “owl” by gobbling on my box call and my mouth call. Gregg answered my gobbles with his natural voice.

But when we quit, there was silence.

“He’s dead,” Gregg suggested, soberly.

“It’s 7:45,” I impatiently pointed out.

Just as we were about to stand, more rustling occurred on the limb. The bird was finally coming around.

We intently watched what appeared to be a wing stretching, some feather preening, and a beard swaying in the wind. We agreed again that we were watching an old longbeard. And a strange one at that.

It was now eight o’clock. Again the roosting turkey assumed his still-life form; again we became frustrated at our unsuccessful attempts to elicit a response.

“What do you think?” Gregg questioned.

“I think I’m ready for a change. Let’s see how close we can get.”

Gregg took charge. It was a mission we would have to plan very carefully and execute with precision. We discussed some very complex tactical maneuvers.

“We’ll have to be quiet,” said Gregg. “Let’s slide out onto the trail and act like a pair of deer. Put your head down and walk *very* slowly. Every now and then, let’s stop and pretend to browse. We’ll get in as close as we can.”

Well, if the situation was not already comical enough, Gregg had taken care of that. It was all I could do to keep from laughing out loud.

We successfully made our way to the trail. Then, in full camouflage, and with head nets and gloves on, we started to move slowly forward.

My head was down and, I must admit, I was producing a pretty fair ren-



THERE, the angle we had needed all along yielded the information we really didn't want. On a water-soaked branch, 40 feet up, lay a porcupine — sound asleep!

dition of a browsing deer. But Gregg was really impressive; he must have been practicing this for years.

"I hope nobody's watching," I whispered.

Several minutes later, and only a few feet up the trail, we stopped to browse. Ever so cautiously, we shifted a glance toward the tree. Still there. No movement.

We moved ahead, now some 40 yards from the base of the big tree. We couldn't yet make out whether the bird's back was toward us, or whether he was looking right at us. So we moved slowly, expecting the gobbler to flush at any time.

But there was no flush. In fact, there was no movement of any kind, and by the time we stopped to browse again, a mere 20 yards from the base of the roost tree, I could control my anxiety no longer.

"Plfff, plfff, plfff, plfff, plfff!" I belted out, laughing helplessly but trying to muffle the noise. Gregg cast a glance my way that seemed to say, "You idiot!" but then he too surrendered to the absurdity. We tried to quiet our laughter by hiding our faces inside our jackets, but it was no use; we had blown our deer coverup.

"It's got to be a decoy," I suggested. "Somebody's rigged up a decoy to move every 15 minutes or so."

We crept a little farther, now almost directly beneath the black shadow on the branch. Then, in a very serious tone, Gregg posed a question that had just come into my mind as well: "Is that a 'coon," he very deliberately asked, "or a turkey?"

I looked closely. Gregg studied the creature too.

Hesitantly, I had to admit, "I think I do see some fur against the sky." We moved to the other side of the tree for a better look.

There, the angle we had needed all



along yielded the information we really didn't want. On a watersoaked branch, 40 feet up, lay a porcupine — sound asleep!

I looked at Gregg and he looked at me — together we burst into laughter that surely could have been heard as far as the loudest gobble. We laughed until our stomachs hurt.

Apparently awakened by all the commotion, that old porky glanced over his shoulder and looked down at us as if to say, oh, come on fellas.

Soaked completely through, and freezing besides, we took stock of our morning. We had spent two hours in the rain, watching a porcupine sleeping on a branch. We had ourselves covered in full camouflage, and had made a variety of calls all morning long, trying to get a response from the creature in the tree. We had even crept through the woods, studiously emulating browsing deer.

Amazed and, indeed, slightly embarrassed, we packed up to leave. Just as we were ready to descend the long hill below us a strange thought occurred to Gregg. He paused to get my attention, looked over my way and, with just a hint of seriousness in his voice, said, "What if he'd gobbled?"



**GAME COMMISSION** officers from throughout the area converged along the banks of the Ohio where, using their turkey trapping expertise, they rescued affected birds. Here, officers ready a cannon net. After it was set and hidden, they baited birds to the site. When birds came in the net was fired over them.



**OFFICERS** race to the net after firing to untangle captured birds before they injure themselves and one another.

**VOLUNTEERS** place captured birds in protective crates for delivery to the nearest emergency treatment center.



# Slick B

*The worst inland oil spill in January 2, 1988 when an Ashland ruptured, spilling nearly a million gallons of oil into the Monongahela River. While major concern was for man health and safety as the slick moved down the Ohio River, a large effort was made to rescue waterfowl.*



**SPECIALISTS** from Tri-State Rescue of Downy Birds were first banded and then given phosporous to flush from the birds' digestive system to protect their digestive systems from further damage.





# Business

tion's history occurred on  
 el Company storage tank  
 ons of diesel fuel into the  
 erns were focused on hu-  
 ed by Pittsburgh and then  
 omplex but less heralded  
 and other wildlife sickened  
 e pollution. Specialists  
 Tri-State Rescue, based in  
 ington, Delaware, were summoned  
 assistance. Game Commission officers  
 ushed to the scene and many volun-  
 from Audubon and other groups rallied  
 h cause. Although bitter cold tempera-  
 and difficulties in finding and captur-  
 sickened birds prohibited the vast major-  
 im being rescued — estimates indicate  
 000 birds perished — nearly every bird  
 ade it to a treatment center was re-  
 and subsequently released. Here are a  
 enes from this noble effort.

by IES Barry Moore

coordinated the recovery procedures.  
 Temperatures were checked and oil was  
 the birds were given Pepto-Bismol to  
 ormination.



ONCE the birds were stabilized they were taken to the Beaver County public works maintenance garage where they were given thorough baths, in assembly line fashion. A sudsing in a solution of dishwasher detergent was followed by three or four rinsings. It took an average of seven hours and 140 gallons of 100-degree water to clean each bird.



AFTER cleaning, the birds were dried, above, and again placed in recovery areas, below, where they were fed a special diet of dog food, egg yolks and a high protein supplement that enabled them to quickly replenish their own protective waterproofing body oils.





# FIELD NOTES



## After 16 Years, Probably Good

**CLARION COUNTY**—Last year, for the first time in my 16-year career as a wildlife law enforcement officer, I did not record a single prosecution during the month of November. I helped with many cases and a few others are still under investigation. But overall, the numbers of violations and complaints are way down from previous years. I would like to believe that my dedication to duty, my close ties with sportsmen, and my efforts to teach youngsters about conservation are the reasons for my clean slate. On the other hand, I'm also wondering if I'm doing something wrong. I'm confused. I don't know if November was a good month or a bad one, or if I'm doing a good or a bad job. —WCO Gordon Couillard, Clarion.



## Bundling Up

Sometime last November a bear broke into a storage shed on SGL 39. It didn't destroy anything, but it took seven deer hides. We figured he was dragging them off to use as blankets for the winter. —LMO James E. Deniker, Sandy Lake.

## Good Advice

**GREENE COUNTY**—It's a good idea to compile a list of the make, model, serial number (if available) and value of each firearm, bow, rod, reel, knife and other sporting equipment you have. Keep one copy of your list in a safe place at home and another in a safe deposit box. Then, if the worst should ever happen— theft, loss or fire—you'll be fully prepared to recover or collect insurance on your valuables. Making such a list is effortless, compared to what it might someday save you. —WCO Robert P. Shaffer, Carmichaels.

## Big Appetite

**SOMERSET COUNTY**—I was checking waterfowl in a thick bottom-land when I saw a goshawk in hot pursuit of a mallard. When I got near where the birds had disappeared I saw the hawk making low passes over the dense brush. I'm certain the duck escaped, and I'm amazed that the goshawk was attacking such a large bird. —WCO Daniel W. Jenkins, Somerset.

## Die-Hards

**CRAWFORD COUNTY**—After dealing with duck and goose hunters, I've come to the conclusion that waterfowling is hazardous to a person's sanity. Finding waterfowlers with camouflaged faces, camouflaged equipment, and even driving camouflaged cars and boats is all too common. When I asked one fellow where he was from, he replied, "The South Zone." But the saddest case involves a friend of mine: he wore a camouflaged tie to his own wedding reception. —WCO Robert W. Criswell, Saegertown.



## Showing Up All Over

Early last November I caught a coyote in one of my fox traps near Hometown. Fur dealers told me of three others being caught in Schuylkill County. And, while working at the Shohola Falls bear check station, Buck Alt (Gary's father) told me he had taken three coyotes in Pike County. Another was shot in bear season and five others were seen or heard. Coyotes are obviously well established here and, in all likelihood, will continue to expand their range. — LMO Stephen Opet, Tamaqua.

## Not to be Taken Lightly

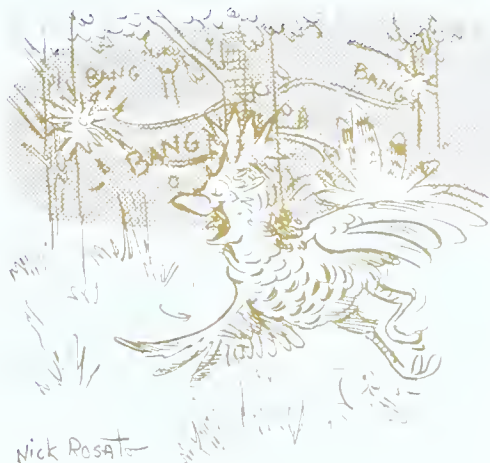
Bill Albaugh, Hillside, was jogging along old Route 217 near Blairsville last fall when he noticed a buck standing in the brush. As he proceeded towards it, Bill became surprised that the deer didn't bolt. When he stopped and the deer still didn't run, Bill decided to try and see how close he could get. When he started into the brush, however, the deer didn't flee, but came right at him. As it got closer it became apparent to Bill that the deer had no fear of him. Afraid that the deer would chase him if he started to run away, Bill tossed a rock toward it. That got the deer moving, and when it did, Bill saw three other deer also bolt from the brush. Apparently, the buck was guarding his harem and had no intentions of leaving the vicinity without them. — IES B.K. Moore, Saltsburg.

## Clever

**GREENE COUNTY**—While visiting a Safety Zone cooperator, the lady of the house told me she didn't appreciate the crows taking her apples. She told me she watched the birds stab the apples, shake them until they broke loose, and then fly away with them. I just wonder what I'll hear next about those ingenious birds. — WCO R. Ansell, Rogersville.

## Gone Huntin'

**INDIANA COUNTY**—It's the end of November, I'm finishing my monthly reports, and the only thing between me and a few hours of hunting is the lack of a Field Note. This is it. — WCO Mel Schake, Indiana.



## FUI

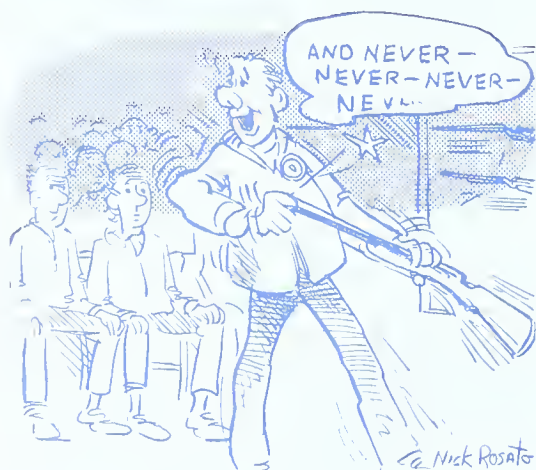
**SOMERSET COUNTY**—Jack Miller, Meyersdale, was watching for squirrels when he saw a grouse come flying erratically through the woods, hit a tree head on, bounce back, and fall to the ground, deader than the proverbial doornail. Not wanting it to go to waste, Jack retrieved the bird. Cleaning it at home, he found its crop was full of grapes. He figures the bird died of FUI—Flying under the Influence. — WCO John G. Smith, Salisbury.

## Any Artificial Light

**CAMBRIA COUNTY**—There seems to be some confusion regarding "spotlighting." According to the Game and Wildlife Code, spotlighting includes casting the rays of any artificial light, including motor vehicle headlights. Going out of your way to aim headlights on game after legal spotlighting hours, during the regular deer seasons, or at any time when there's a firearm or bow and arrow in the vehicle, is a violation. — WCO L.A. Olsavsky, Colver.

## Never Say Never

"No, I never carry loaded guns in my car," replied one of the spotlighters I had just pulled over. But when I worked the action of a firearm I had found hidden in the back seat, out flew a 22 long rifle hollow-point. "Boy, one must have been jammed in the bottom of the magazine," came a reply. I then proceeded to eject 13 more cartridges, at which point the man exclaimed, "Wow, it was really jammed." IES Robert G. MacWilliams, Sandy Lake.



## Emphasizing His Point

**CENTRE COUNTY**—Hunter education instructor Eric Haupt was, as an example, demonstrating how an individual blew off a finger after sticking it into the muzzle of his shotgun and then having the gun discharge. Eric slightly overdid it, though. He got his finger stuck and it was only after considerable effort—and embarrassment—in front of 150 students, that he was able to free his finger. —WCO George Mock, Coburn.

## Plenty Remaining

**FOREST COUNTY**—Last year hunters took 23 bears from this county, yet five were seen and two were hit by vehicles before buck season had ended. There's sure to be plenty around this year. —WCO Al Pedder, Marienville.

## Quick Cleaning

**PERRY COUNTY**—It's impossible to please everyone. I met two hunters who were happy with the pheasants they had taken, but they complained about the feathers being too hard to remove. When I told them we were trying to breed a pheasant with a zipper, they thought that was okay, but suggested that Velcro might be better. —WCO Jim Brown, Loysville.

## Save That Tree

**CRAWFORD COUNTY**—Land Manager Dick Oliver and I were patrolling Warren County on the opening of bear season when we came upon an unusual sight. As we drove up a mountain we found ten grouse roosting in a tree and ten more feeding underneath. Neither of us, in our 34 years of combined experiences, has ever seen that many grouse in one spot. —WCO David L. Myers, Linesville.

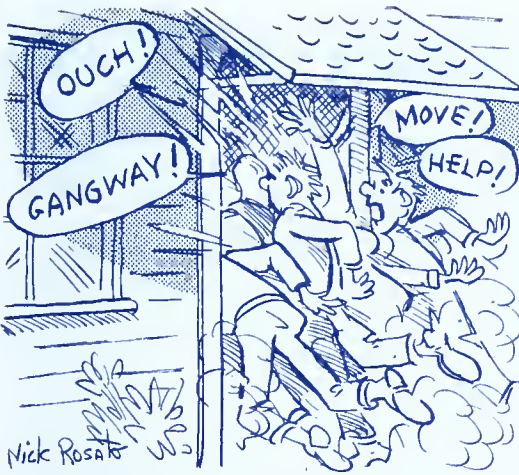
## Good Guys

**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY**—While I was visiting with an elderly lady, she mentioned that deer hunters are much more courteous than other motorists who drive by her secluded rural home. Deer hunters, she says, drive slower, thereby not creating clouds of dust that dirty her windows, and they often wave or say hello if they see her outside. —WCO James M. Kazakavage, Sunbury.

## As It Should Be

**NORTHAMPTON COUNTY**—I found quite a few hunters on the opening day of the antlered deer season and several had especially nice trophies. It was apparent that the majority of the bucks were taken by hunters who had spent considerable time scouting before the season. On the other hand, those who did their hunting within sight of their vehicles didn't fare as well. —WCO Richard W. Anderson, Nazareth.





### Eye-Opener

**ARMSTRONG COUNTY**—Students at last year's hunter-trapper education class at the Seminole Rod & Gun club got a real treat. While they were outside on break a black bear showed up, generating a lot of excitement. Instructor Glenn Reed claims the club house door wasn't large enough to let all the students through it quickly enough. He also claims that because the class started at 7 a.m., several students weren't fully awake when instruction began, but that the bear's arrival changed that noticeably. — WCO Al Scott, Rural Valley.

### Stay Still

**CAMERON COUNTY**—Eugene Rachuba, Beaver Falls, was patiently waiting for two squirrels to come within shooting range when they suddenly disappeared. He then saw a bobcat closing in. He remained motionless as the cat moved closer and closer, and then actually jumped up on the very log Eugene was sitting on. Two things can be learned from that occurrence. One, the behavior of squirrels, blue jays and other animals, even insects, can tip off a hunter of something happening nearby. (That same behavior can also warn other animals of the presence of a hunter.) Second, because most animals are color-blind, staying motionless is the best way for a hunter to remain undetected. — WCO Joe Carlos, Driftwood.

### Grand Finale

**ADAMS COUNTY**—Last fall I presented a program on wildlife to Cub Scout Pack 73 at the Pheasant Hollow Farms Wildlife Sanctuary. Because I also was stocking pheasants at the time, I took a couple of the birds along, showed them to the group, and then set them free. Later in the week I saw a newspaper account of my presentation and it ended with, "He then fluttered into the woods, ending his talk." I'm not sure who they were referring to, but either way I hope the kids don't expect the same ending this year. — WCO Larry Haynes, Gettysburg.

### X Marks the Spot

**POTTER COUNTY**—When three hunters from Pittsburgh asked where they might find a bear, I drew them a map showing where I had seen one three weeks earlier. They went to the spot on the first day of the season and saw six, but didn't get a shot at any. Next, I suppose, they'll want me to tell them how to shoot. — WCO Ronald G. Clouser, Galeton.



### Keep It Up

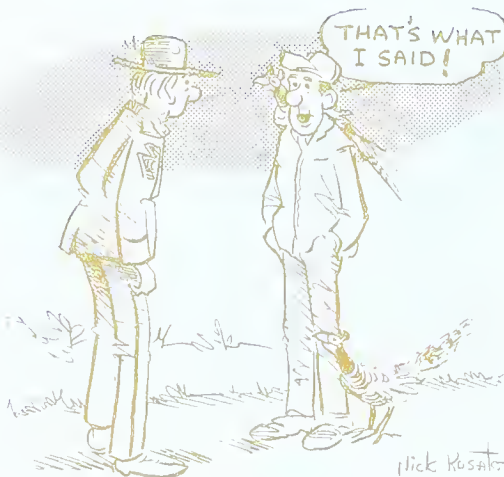
**DAUPHIN COUNTY**—Those of you who feed birds all winter should keep your feeders supplied until the birds no longer need them. That's often difficult to determine, so just keep putting out feed until the birds stop coming. — WCO Scott R. Bills, Halifax.

## Show & Tell

**BLAIR COUNTY**—Deputies Bill Myers and Paul Snowberger borrowed their church bus and took 27 members of the congregation on a spotlighting trip. The group saw over 300 deer, which was enough to make at least two members go out and buy hunting licenses the next day, and I know of at least two participants who went back in deer season and got deer. By giving of their time and money, these two officers convinced at least 27 people that there's plenty of deer around. Thanks, guys.—WCO Don Martin, Williamsburg.

## Two-Way Arrangement

**SCHUYLKILL COUNTY**—It's not too early to start planning for the upcoming hunting seasons. Check with landowners now, offer to help with some chores, and I'm sure you'll get favorable responses. We're fortunate to have so much private land in this county open to public hunting. Let's return the favor.—WCO John C. Shutkufski, Pottsville.



## Too Many?

**WASHINGTON COUNTY**—Believe me, it's impossible for conservation officers to please everybody. Just when I thought I'd heard it all, a local resident complained that we were stocking too many pheasants in the county.—WCO Matthew Hough, Washington.

## Congratulations, On Both Counts

Both Tom and Delores Miller, Tyrone, will remember November 23, 1987. At 10 a.m. their daughter was born, and six hours later Tom dropped a 220-pound bear.—LMO Steve Schweitzer, New Enterprise.

## Misunderstood

**YORK COUNTY**—To promote the candidacy of a man named Hunt for a local political office, triangular red posters with his name on them were placed on utility poles throughout the county. I wasn't too surprised, then, when a young lad called, wanting to know if we had put up the signs and if those were the areas where people were supposed to hunt.—WCO Robert L. Yeakel, Red Lion.

## Reciprocate

Many people called our office last fall, wanting to know where in the Southeast Special Regulations area they might get permission to hunt for bonus deer. One caller said he was told "maybe" when he asked a landowner for permission. When I suggested that an offer to help with some chores might change that maybe to a yes, the caller replied, "Boy, I never thought of that."—FAS P.A. Hilbert, Cleona.

## Quite a Sight

**TIOGA COUNTY**—Early on opening day of buck season, George Dempsey heard a commotion that sounded like antlers crashing. He looked and looked and eventually saw five bucks, running in circles, clashing antlers with one another. He waited for any one of them to offer a shot, but none did before the group disappeared. I'm wondering if the deer were putting their heads together, trying to figure out a plan to escape.—WCO John Snyder, Wellsboro.





**A TOTAL** of 134 elk, including 34 branched antlered bulls, 50 mature cows, 17 calves, 22 antlerless elk, and 11 others of undetermined age or sex were found during this year's annual PGC/DER elk survey. A few elk may have been missed, however, as unfavorable weather conditions made it particularly difficult to find the animals this year.

# Elk Herd Stable

**P**ENNSYLVANIA'S elk herd remains relatively stable, according to the annual aerial and ground census compiled last February by Game Commission and Department of Environmental Resources personnel.

The census shows 134 elk, including

34 branched antlered bulls, 50 mature cows, 17 calves, 22 antlerless elk, and 11 others of undetermined age or sex. The total compares with 135 in January, 1982; 122 in 1983; 119 in 1984; 131 in 1985; 135 in 1986; and 140 in January, 1987. A preliminary survey indicated there might be a few more elk, missed by spotters in airplanes during the actual census.

In 1987, at least 12 animals were known removed from the herd, including 8 for crop damage, 1 killed illegally, 1 death from brainworm, and 2 other deaths from unknown causes. For the first time in many years, no elk were known to have been killed in mistake for deer.

Bureau of Forestry and Bureau of State Parks personnel, as well as Penn State DuBois campus wildlife students and others, assisted.



# Plantings for Wildlife

**T**HE Game Commission again is offering seedling packets and the agency's specially formulated seed mix for persons interested in providing food and cover for wildlife. The \$2 seedling packet contains 15 seedlings, three each of scotch pine, white spruce, American bittersweet, Asiatic crabapple and Washington hawthorn. These trees and shrubs are grown at the agency's Howard Nursery. The seed mix, a ten-pound bag of dwarf grain sorghum, millet, buckwheat and dwarf hybrid sunflower, is available for \$3. This is the same mix the Game Commission has been providing cooperators enrolled in our public access programs. Locations, dates and times of sales known at press time follow. Watch local newspapers for possible additional sale sites and times.

**Bradford Co.** On main streets of Canton and Troy, April 15-16, 10 a.m.; **Carbon Co.** Lehigh Mall, April 15-16, 10 a.m.; **Columbia Co.** PP&L

**Susquehanna Riverlands**, Berwick, April 17, 1 p.m.; **Lackawanna Co.** Viewmont Mall, Scranton, April 15-16, 10 a.m.; **Luzerne Co.** Wyoming Valley Mall, Wilkes-Barre, April 15-16, 10 a.m.; **Monroe Co.** Stroud Mall, Stroudsburg, April 15-16, 10 a.m.; **Montour Co.** PP&L Montour Preserve, Washingtonville, April 16, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.; **Sullivan Co.** DuShore Square, April 15-16, 10 a.m.; **Susquehanna Co.** main streets of Hallstead and Montrose, April 15-16, 10 a.m.;

**Berks Co.** PGC Southeast Region Office, Reading, weekdays, April 11-29, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; **Bucks Co.** New Hope Solebury High School, April 23, 9 a.m. to noon; **Dauphin Co.** Larry's Texaco, Derry St., Harrisburg, April 22, noon to 6 p.m., and April 23, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Brady's Sporting Goods, Millersburg, April 22, noon to 6 p.m., and April 23, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Dauphin County Anglers and Conservationists, Rt. 325, Dauphin, April 22, noon to 6 p.m., and April 23, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; PGC Headquarters, Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, April 25-29, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; **Lancaster Co.** Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area, April 23, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and April 24, noon to 5 p.m.; **Montgomery Co.** St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Rt. 73 west of Zieglersville, April 9, 9 a.m. to noon; Pennypack Watershed Assoc., April 23, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; **Northampton Co.** Palmer Park Mall, April 13-17;

**Centre Co.** Scotia Range, April 20-24, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Howard Nursery, April 18-22, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; **Clearfield Co.** DuBois Mall, April 15, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., April 16, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., and April 17, noon to 5 p.m.;

**BEN MAURER**, farm game manager in the southeast region, inspects a planting of the agency's seed mix. This mix and seedling packets will be sold at various locations and times throughout the state this month.





**Lycoming Co.** PGC Northcentral Region Office, Jersey Shore, April 8, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.; **McKean Co.** Market Basket, Smethport, April 9, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; **Potter Co.** Salvadges Super Duper, Galeton, April 16, 9 a.m. to noon;

**Adams Co.** Gettysburg Square, April 22, noon to 4 p.m., and April 23, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.; **Huntingdon Co.** PGC Southcentral Region Office, Rt. 22, Huntingdon, April 23, 8 a.m. to noon; **Raystown Sports Show**, Huntingdon County Fair Grounds, April 22–24, during show hours;

**Beaver Co.** Chippewa Mall, April 30, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; **Cambria Co.** Ebensburg, Jamesway Plaza, April 9, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; **Westmoreland Co.** PGC Southwest Region Office, Ligonier, April 9, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.;

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## *Books in Brief...*

(Order from publisher, not from Game Commission)

**Hunting on Horseback**, by Jim Ottman, Paladin Press, P.O. Box 1307, Boulder, CO 80306, 151 pp., \$19.95 delivered. There are big game hunting regions, particularly in the West, where the only reasonable method of transportation is the horse. Each year many hunters have their first experience with these critters. Often, through lack of understanding and preparation, it's an unhappy one. This little volume can eliminate most of the grief. Ottman has called on decades of personal experience to provide the answers that can make such a hunt memorable instead of miserable. There's nothing arty or precious about the writing; it's just good solid information presented in understandable language. He even describes exercises that will get you into reasonable riding condition before you ever climb aboard a horse (not a bad idea at all). Other chapters tell how to plan your trip, how to create a good relationship with guides and outfitters, what gear and clothing are needed, etc. Useful stuff.

**Speed Train Your Own Retriever**, by Larry Mueller, Stackpole Books, Cameron & Kelker Sts., Harrisburg, PA 17105, 222 pp., softbound, \$16.95. Here, from the Hunting Dog Editor of *Outdoor Life*, is a step-by-step procedure for training a retriever. "Speed train" doesn't mean you'll have a finished dog in only a week's time. The techniques covered here were designed for the dog owner who wants to get the most from the limited time he has to devote to dog training. The sequence and procedures are covered in detail and highlighted with 200 photographs and illustrations.

**A Guide to Animal Tracking and Behavior**, by Donald and Lillian Stokes, Stokes Nature Guides, 52 Nowell Farm Road, Carlisle, MA 01741, 418 pp., \$18.95. An understanding of animal tracks and signs and how they relate to the animal's behavior is paramount to understanding wildlife, especially mammals because most are secretive and nocturnal. In this outstanding guide—the sixth in the Stokes Nature Guide Series—those two facets are interwoven, giving the user ready reference to interpreting our natural world. Over 200 excellent illustrations and range maps are particularly useful.

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**ELMER J. HUNT, Equinunk, poses with his Wayne County bruin, one of the 1560 taken in 1987, which established a new record bear harvest.**

# 1987 Bear Season Results

**By Gary L. Alt**  
**PGC Wildlife Biologist**

## Harvest Size and Location

Pennsylvania's 1987 three-day bear season (November 23 to 25) resulted in a record harvest of 1560, slightly larger than the previous state record of 1549 set in 1984. In 1987 bears were harvested in Juniata and Montour counties for the first time since at least 1949, when county harvest records were first kept.

The ten largest county harvests in 1987 were: Lycoming, 163; Clinton, 157; Centre, 112; Clearfield, 106; Tioga, 87; Pike, 84; Elk, 72; McKean, 58; Cameron, 58; and Indiana, 53. Annual county harvests from 1980 through 1987 are listed in Table 1.

## Kill By Day

Of the bears taken in 1987, 76 per-

cent (1187) were taken on the first day, 17 percent (262) on the second, and 7 percent (111) on the third. These results are similar to 1986's when 70 percent (960), 27 percent (367) and 3 percent (35) were taken on the first, second and third days, respectively.

## Hunting Pressure

Slightly over 92,000 bear licenses were sold in 1987, approximately a 3 percent decrease from 1986. On a 71.1-mile survey route in the Poconos, a 7 percent decrease in the number of parked cars was recorded for the opening morning of 1987 compared to 1986.

Shortly after each day's starting time, on the same Pocono survey, 595, 259 and 106 cars were counted, respectively, on the first, second and third days. Compared to the first day, there-

fore, there was a 57 percent reduction in hunting pressure on the second day and an 82 percent reduction on the third day. By comparison, in 1986 hunting pressure dropped 47 percent and 88 percent on the second and third days compared to the first.

## Harvest Rates

Bear project cooperators captured and tagged 312 bears in 1987 that should have been available for harvest. Of these, 71 were taken, yielding a 22.8 percent harvest rate. That is slightly

**Table 1**  
**Pennsylvania Bear Harvest, By County, 1980-1987.**

| County       | 1980 | 1981 | 1982 | 1983  | 1984  | 1985  | 1986  | 1987  | Total | Average |
|--------------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------|
| Armstrong    | *    | 7    | 0    | 0     | 3     | 4     | 0     | 4     | 18    | *       |
| Bedford      | *    | *    | *    | *     | *     | 1     | 1     | 0     | 2     | *       |
| Blair        | *    | 5    | 2    | 7     | 17    | 6     | 8     | 7     | 52    | *       |
| Bradford     | 34   | 24   | 14   | 29    | 46    | 42    | 35    | 26    | 250   | 31      |
| Cambria      | *    | 7    | 12   | 3     | 11    | 6     | 10    | 25    | 74    | *       |
| Cameron      | 57   | 56   | 22   | 75    | 86    | 59    | 84    | 58    | 497   | 62      |
| Carbon       | 6    | 24   | 10   | 38    | 36    | 23    | 22    | 50    | 209   | 26      |
| Centre       | 23   | 28   | 20   | 77    | 56    | 46    | 86    | 112   | 448   | 56      |
| Clarion      | 3    | 1    | 7    | 7     | 7     | 3     | 4     | 10    | 42    | 5       |
| Clearfield   | 65   | 63   | 24   | 85    | 87    | 75    | 67    | 106   | 572   | 72      |
| Clinton      | 85   | 78   | 49   | 139   | 197   | 88    | 129   | 157   | 922   | 115     |
| Columbia     | 1    | 1    | 0    | 9     | 4     | 1     | 3     | 10    | 29    | 4       |
| Crawford     | *    | *    | *    | *     | *     | *     | 1     | 1     | 2     | *       |
| Elk          | 77   | 51   | 30   | 118   | 65    | 47    | 58    | 72    | 518   | 65      |
| Forest       | 15   | 16   | 23   | 50    | 31    | 6     | 21    | 23    | 185   | 23      |
| Huntingdon   | 5    | 10   | 12   | 19    | 24    | 20    | 12    | 19    | 121   | 15      |
| Indiana      | *    | 0    | 8    | 13    | 10    | 7     | 16    | 53    | 107   | *       |
| Jefferson    | 14   | 26   | 19   | 34    | 31    | 26    | 32    | 45    | 227   | 28      |
| Juniata      | *    | *    | *    | *     | *     | *     | 0     | 1     | 1     | *       |
| Lackawanna   | 25   | 7    | 4    | 39    | 42    | 32    | 19    | 28    | 196   | 25      |
| Luzerne      | 21   | 5    | 9    | 14    | 33    | 26    | 21    | 36    | 165   | 21      |
| Lycoming     | 74   | 84   | 61   | 157   | 148   | 126   | 154   | 163   | 967   | 121     |
| McKean       | 76   | 41   | 32   | 107   | 108   | 26    | 63    | 58    | 511   | 64      |
| Mifflin      | 5    | 10   | 7    | 30    | 20    | 22    | 13    | 13    | 120   | 15      |
| Monroe       | 34   | 42   | 29   | 76    | 60    | 38    | 74    | 51    | 404   | 51      |
| Montour      | *    | *    | 0    | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 1     | 1     | *       |
| Pike         | 66   | 54   | 47   | 78    | 112   | 71    | 79    | 84    | 591   | 74      |
| Potter       | 50   | 45   | 38   | 92    | 65    | 30    | 89    | 52    | 461   | 58      |
| Schuylkill   | *    | *    | 1    | 4     | 3     | 1     | 3     | 5     | 17    | *       |
| Snyder       | 6    | 3    | 1    | 6     | 8     | 5     | 4     | 15    | 48    | 6       |
| Somerset     | *    | *    | *    | *     | *     | 5     | 7     | 31    | 43    | *       |
| Sullivan     | 26   | 39   | 6    | 29    | 41    | 24    | 40    | 29    | 234   | 29      |
| Susquehanna  | 1    | 1    | 0    | 0     | 3     | 2     | 2     | 1     | 10    | 1       |
| Tioga        | 81   | 46   | 46   | 85    | 99    | 75    | 99    | 87    | 618   | 77      |
| Union        | 6    | 11   | 9    | 15    | 19    | 16    | 12    | 11    | 99    | 12      |
| Venango      | 4    | 1    | 1    | 1     | 4     | 1     | 10    | 17    | 39    | 5       |
| Warren       | 21   | 12   | 29   | 54    | 40    | 15    | 30    | 34    | 235   | 29      |
| Wayne        | 17   | 8    | 12   | 28    | 18    | 23    | 35    | 29    | 170   | 21      |
| Westmoreland | *    | *    | *    | *     | *     | 16    | 6     | 18    | 40    | *       |
| Wyoming      | 23   | 13   | 4    | 10    | 15    | 15    | 13    | 18    | 111   | 14      |
| Total        | 921  | 819  | 588  | 1,528 | 1,549 | 1,029 | 1,362 | 1,560 | 9,356 | 1,170   |

\* Asterisk indicates the county was closed to bear hunting for the year indicated. Average annual harvest was not calculated for any county closed any of the years 1980 through 1987.



larger than most of the rates from 1980 through 1986 (Table 2). It is, however, approximately what is necessary to keep the bear population from increasing. Accordingly, we anticipate 1988 bear numbers to be similar to 1987's.

### Conclusions

For six decades, from the 1920s through the 1970s, Pennsylvania's annual bear harvests averaged slightly over 400. Bear seasons were closed statewide in 1977 and 1978, and in certain counties from 1980 through 1985. A bear license system went into effect in 1981, reducing bear hunting pressure to less than half of what it had been estimated to be, and a trap and transfer program was initiated to increase bear numbers in suitable but understocked areas. The bear population responded dramatically to each of these management programs. Both the harvests and the distribution of black bears have increased to levels never

**Table 2**  
**Statewide harvest rates of bears tagged in Pennsylvania during the year of harvest.**

| Year | Harvest Rate |
|------|--------------|
| 1980 | 20.5%        |
| 1981 | 14.7%        |
| 1982 | 13.1%        |
| 1983 | 23.9%        |
| 1984 | 21.9%        |
| 1985 | 14.5%        |
| 1986 | 18.1%        |
| 1987 | 22.8%        |

seen before in this century. The five largest bear harvests ever recorded in Pennsylvania have occurred in the past five years, averaging 1406 bears per year. To ensure continued success of our valuable bear resource we are currently working on further refinements and improvements of our bear management program, which should allow more precise population control on a regional level.

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# Please Yourself

**T**HERE'S ALWAYS hunting pressure on opening day. Not just the kind that means a lot of gunners in the woods—a blaze orange parade—but another, inconspicuous kind of pressure. It's the pressure to perform and succeed that we hunters place on ourselves and, too often, let others put on us.

Of course, a certain amount of drive is a good thing. It makes us get out of a warm bed to wait, instead, in cold dark woods for daylight to come. We stay an extra half-hour on a snowy deer stand, push out one more grouse thicket, walk one more mile. The added effort we give to the hunt is something that comes from within us, to satisfy standards we set for ourselves.

## Nothing Wrong

When we push ourselves to please ourselves, hunting is the challenge it should be. There's nothing wrong with a hunter setting a stricter goal for himself than the law permits. He may decide to take only a tom turkey in the fall or an 8-pointer or better in buck season. Perhaps he limits himself to harvesting his game with a longbow or flintlock or singleshoot. Though his take may be less when the season ends, he's not disappointed or apologetic. He put the pressure on himself and was rewarded by the effort.

There's another sort of pressure, though, sometimes real, sometimes imagined, never easy to withstand.

That's the pressure others put on us. If others have expectations of us that are different from our own and we succumb to them, our hunts can be miserable.

One of the first years I hunted I stayed in a north country deer camp. It was a truly classic camp, iron skillets, oilcloth on the table, a gas lantern and an outhouse. Looking over the place, I noticed a torn bit of plaid flannel thumbtacked to a wall. "What's this?" I asked in innocence. "That's Joe's shirttail," I was told. "We cut it off because he missed a buck." Everyone laughed, including me, though it worried me as well. Suppose I missed, too?

I know now it was a silly concern, but at the time I was young in both hunting experience and in years. I didn't realize that missing is as much a part of the hunt as making the shot. None of us is perfect. Though we try our best, each has—and will—miss. The shirttail bit is more a "join the club" gesture, a universal humbler. But I didn't see it that way.

I spent a troubled night. Mixed with the normal anticipation of the next day's hunt was the fear of missing. I dreaded the embarrassment of everyone knowing and having my shirttail displayed as a memorial to my ineptness. The next day, whenever I heard a nearby shot or saw deer moving, my heart thumped doubletime with the additional pressure not to fail the shot. As it was, no bucks showed and I was off the hook.

Since then I've matured in the sport as well as age. I know my camp companions would have been very surprised had they known their shirttail joke gave me such anxiety. But I wonder how many other novice hunters have worried needlessly that they might not be able to make the grade seemingly set by their partners.

Even if five small game gunners walk a weedfield in a row, to each, hunting is intensely solitary. Each is

## Another View...

by Linda Steiner



IF WE'RE happy with a one-horn spike, we shouldn't let anyone demean us because we didn't wait for a rack. Often, those who do the most belittling have the least to brag about.



solely responsible for his shot, not only whether he hits or misses, but whether he shoots at all. No teamwork is possible at the climactic moment when the decision is made whether or not to squeeze the trigger. Afterward, the hunter must live with his actions, have confidence he made the best choice at the time, and, ultimately, that he gave his best effort. Second-guessing brings only unhappiness. It's best to go on to the next shooting opportunity and try again.

It's not always easy, though, when someone says, "How'd you miss that one?" or "What's the matter, why didn't you shoot?" It's just human nature for the spectator to think he could have done better, would have made the shot, would have found an opportunity to fire, if he'd been given the same chance. Wise hunters let the criticism slide. But not everyone is thick-skinned or so cocksure of his abilities. For many there's a tightening of the hand on the gun stock, a bit of nervous apprehension, added pressure not to mess up the next time.

One gal I know had a wide-antlered buck pushed past her stand during her first deer season. Her husband and some friends had driven it. She had a shotgun and, in her newness to the sport, trusting (as she had to) her own

inexperienced judgment of when to shoot, she let the deer come closer and closer. Finally putting up the gun, she waited for the buck to step from behind one last tree. But the buck, as bucks will, decided it was time to turn tail and run. In the excitement and surprise, she never fired at all.

When her hunting partners saw how near the deer had come, in their frustration after the fruitless drive, they berated her for not getting the buck. I'm sure they soon forgot the incident or, if it's remembered at all, they probably chuckle about the "big one that got away." To them it was a small thing. But my friend took their words seriously and let the mishap grow in importance.

With the next deer season approaching, she confided to me that she wasn't sure she was going to hunt. She didn't want to make a mistake in front of everyone again. I hope I helped when I explained her misadventure wasn't unique. We could all tell similar tales. Besides, it was her choice alone whether to shoot, and no one but she could say what was the right or wrong thing to have done under the circumstances. If that experience had been a good teacher, more experience would be a better one.

There was a popular song a few

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## GAME NEWS

For a Friend . . .

years ago that chorused, "You can't please everyone, so you've got to please yourself." If we're happy with the one-horn spike we shot, we shouldn't let anyone demean us because we didn't wait for a rack. Often those who do the most belittling have the least to brag about.

I no longer have patience with those who have rarely or never taken a deer with a bow acting superior when I say I tagged a doe in archery season. I believe, with the limitations of the hunting method, that any deer taken with an arrow is a trophy to be proud of.

Many of those who boast how they were "waiting for antlers" and "could have shot any number of does" in archery season, probably couldn't have made the shots if they'd tried. Experienced archers know many things can happen between the talking and tagging. But when someone raises his eyebrows and says, "Oh, you shot a doe?", it's hard to keep your pride, though in your heart you know better.

One bowhunting friend fell to the pressure of opinion last season and regretted it. An archery lover, she'd have liked taking a deer, any deer, with the bow. But she passed up several shots at does, waiting for the buck everyone else expected her to shoot. The season slipped away and at its end she was deerless. In not wanting to disappoint her peers, she'd disappointed herself. But not next year, she vowed, next year she'd hunt to suit herself. That's an attitude I wholeheartedly applaud.

### *GAMEcooking Tips*

Waterfowling is popular all along our eastern coast, even in the South. The addition of hot sausage to fowl is a Southern influence, as is the inclusion of seafood. This is an unusual recipe for northern palates, but once you try it, you'll agree they know how to cook down there.

#### **Florida Gumbo**

- 2 large wild ducks, cleaned
- 1 onion, chopped
- 4 ribs celery with leaves, chopped
- 1 15-ounce can chicken broth
- 1 pound hot smoked sausage, cut into one-inch pieces
- 1/2 cup oil
- 1/2 cup rye flour
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- 4 scallions, chopped
- 1 pound medium shrimp, cleaned and deveined

Place the ducks, onion, two of the celery ribs, and chicken broth in a

Dutch oven. Add enough water to cover the ducks. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer about one hour. Remove ducks and allow to cool, reserving stock. Remove meat from bones and cut into bite-size pieces.

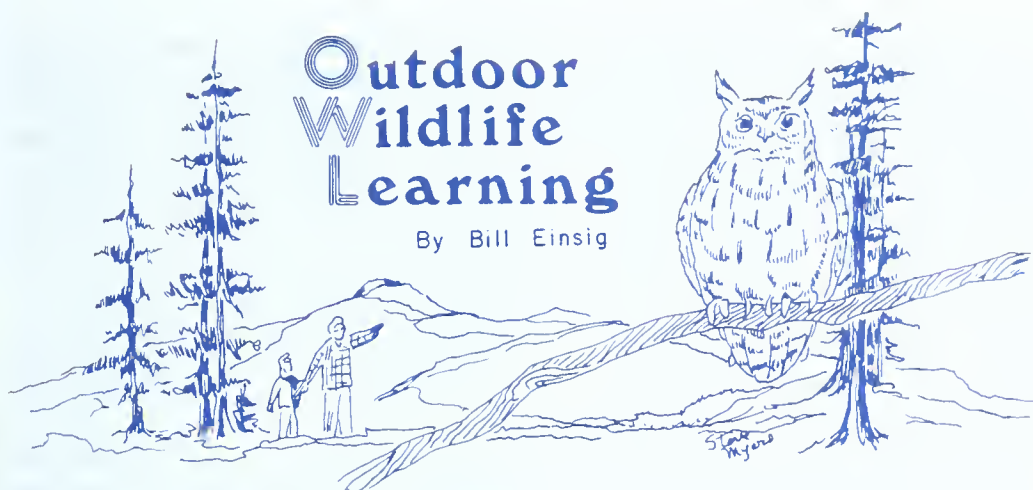
Add sausage to stock. Pierce skin to release juices into stock. Simmer one-half hour. Heat oil in a heavy pot. Stir in rye flour. Heat 15 to 20 minutes, stirring constantly, until a nice roux is formed. Add remaining chopped celery, peppers and scallions and cook in roux ten minutes, stirring constantly. Gradually stir in reserved hot stock. Bring to a boil and simmer ten minutes, uncovered. Add shrimp and simmer five minutes. Add duck, stir and heat through. Serve over rice. This is best made ahead of time and reheated to allow the flavors to ripen. Serves 8.

—FROM WILD GAME COOKERY  
BY CAROL VANCE WARY



# Outdoor Wildlife Learning

By Bill Einsig



## Take a Hike

**W**ALKING is good exercise. A walker can burn up to 100 calories a mile. Some experts say we should walk at least a half-hour each time out, and about 20 minutes of that time should be at a pace fast enough to bring the heart rate up to 120 beats per minute. The aerobic value to heart and lungs is significant, especially if walking is done on a regular basis.

While many of us walk a great deal each day, few of us walk fast enough or long enough. We stroll rather than walk and our concentration drifts from the exercise of the workout to countless other things that catch our attention. At least that's my problem.

Sometime ago I tried a daily regimen of light lunches and noontime walks. Typically, every walk went something like this:

Start stopwatch. Begin at a moderate pace and increase until heart rate reaches 120 beats per minute. The loop through the borough park is about one mile. I should be able to do two laps in less than 30 minutes.

While passing the picnic area with its row of deformed spruces and cedars I wonder why park managers prune their trees in such a manner. Some are square, others are round, and a few are lopsided triangles. And, of course, all lowest branches on the pines and spruces have been cut off. Even the tall old hardwoods have been topped in deference to planes using the neighboring airport.

Woops! Better quicken my pace instead of inspecting the pruning job.

I swing off the road and start through a woodlot. Deer droppings. Even here, in this tiny strip of trees bordered by a park-

ing lot on one side and backyards on the other, deer are thriving. The pellets look fresh, but I'm losing time. Better move on.

Out of the woods and along the creek, a blur catches my eye. My head swings around just in time to see a kingfisher zoom along the water. My eyes follow him downstream to a snag in an old tree. I'd like to wait a few minutes to watch him catch his lunch, but I'm behind my walking schedule.

Past the ball field, approaching the lower picnic pavilions, I notice a large stand of dandelions in seed, the last of the season.

Lots of legends surround dandelion puffs. One says the number of blows it takes to clear all seeds from an old flower head equals the number of children you'll have. I wonder if that's true?

The first seed head blows clean with just two puffs. Not bad, I actually have three kids. A second dandelion takes five determined puffs, while the third seems as if it's been welded together. After 15 puffs, half the seed head is still covered with soft down.

At that point I notice a mother steering her toddler away from me—away from the strange middle-age man blowing dandelion puffs in the lawn of a public park on a Wednesday afternoon. A person just can't be too careful. Back to the exercise.

A house sparrow with a beakful of nesting material lands in an old cedar. But this is November! I wonder if there's a new nest in that tree. I can't stay, though. I must keep walking.

Recent rains left large puddles on the edge of the park driveway. Surrounding



each puddle is a zone of silty mud decorated with tracks of earthworms. Interesting patterns. I wonder if there's a common direction to these tracks. Were the worms all guided by the same influence? If so, there may be a common pattern. How do I know there was more than one worm? Neat idea for some student science project. But not now, back to the walk.

Human influence on this park is obvious. The single lane asphalt roadways are almost wide enough for two small cars to pass each other; the berm is rutted with tracks that veer into the lawn. Speed bumps and old utility poles force drivers to slow down and guide them to obvious parking areas.

Aluminum cans litter the ground, remains from a private party held the previous night. In general, though, litter control is quite good, although some trash looks like it was simply thrown in the direction of the trash can and left where it fell for a park worker to pick up.

An amazing collection of tiny bits of litter hides among the pebbles of the parking areas. Rooting with a stick, I find pieces of aluminum foil, lots of cigarette filters, cellophane and, of course, pull tabs and bottle caps.

Many of the caps are so rusted they've begun to break apart. How many years has this collection been here, helping to pave the parking area? There might also be a treasure trove of coins that fell from pockets or autos as visitors came and went. But no time to explore now. I'm exercising.

The last leg takes me back to my car. I check my watch to get the time for my first loop—35 minutes! One mile in 35 minutes? I also know that my heart rate, thanks to my frequent stops, never approached 120—except for the moment

in the dandelion patch when the mother gave me the dubious look.

So maybe my walk wasn't a prime workout. I enjoyed it, though, and I learned something and I got several useful ideas. Next time I'll do better. You're not supposed to rush into these strenuous exercise programs too fast anyway.

## Books for the Curious Walker

*Suburban Wildlife: An Introduction to the Common Animals of Your Backyard and Local Park.* Richard Headstrom. Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1984.

With this volume Headstrom continues his series of popular books for the casual reader interested in the familiar critters that live near most of us. His vignettes describe interesting tidbits of behavior, or adaptive peculiarities, of animals we think we know well.

Woodpeckers, moles, raccoons and ant lions are all common animals and yet, Headstrom's anecdotes, gleaned from years of personal curiosity, include many observations you probably never knew. Best of all, this book is the kind of brief easy reading that can whet the interest of young naturalists.

Ask for current prices and ordering information at your local bookstore or library.

*The Urban Naturalist.* Steven Garber. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 1987.

Think of urban wildlife and you'll probably think of cockroaches, pigeons and cats. Actually, though, large metropolises have a significant variety of wildlife living successfully within city parks, empty lots and fringe areas along water courses. Members of many wild species eke out a living within the concrete and asphalt habitat.

Garber discusses these animals and provides a brief summary of their natural history. Unfortunately, much of his commentary is just as applicable to animal life on a forested ridge as it is to life in the cities. I hoped to learn how raccoons, snakes and owls adapt to city life. How were the lifestyles of the city critters different from those of their rural counterparts? There was too little of that kind of insight.

The book does provide a brief look into the problem of feral animals, pets gone wild, and it is a very readable text suitable for armchair naturalists. It's a good addition to the school library.

Look for it at your local library or your favorite bookstore.



**T**HE 1974 hunting season had drawn to a close. And, like all Game Protectors, I was glad it was over and was looking forward to the holidays and some needed rest. The 1974 season seemed to go much faster than usual. Although each one is different, they are all the same, but certain incidents stand out from each season.

It was shortly after Christmas when a woman called. She thought somebody was jacklighting deer. The place she described was on the side of Armenia Mountain, a dairy farming area where most of the farmers have fields and pastures that climb up the mountain until the terrain becomes too steep. It was in these back fields the woman suspected the killing was going on. She said it seemed to be on Friday and Saturday nights. Thinking this was going to be easy, I decided to stake out the area the next Friday night. The lay of the land was such that I could drive up on a hill and look across at the back fields where the activity was taking place.

It was the kind of night one expects of January—cold winds and snow squalls. After watching the hillside until the wee hours of the morning, I left. I don't mind telling you I was disgusted; not only was there no activity, but also January was not the time of year I expect to do jacklighting patrol.

A few nights later, the lady called again with the same report, lights and shooting (22 rifle). I hurried to the area, but was too late. By now, I was determined to catch whoever was involved. I spent several more nights sitting on the hill in my car, but had no luck. I tried sneaking into the area so nobody would know I was there. I didn't even tell the woman which nights I was going to be working. But my efforts were to no avail.

My next plan was to drive up on Armenia Mountain and then walk down over to the fields. The first night I had three deputies with me: John Parsell, Jerry Ross and Dale Yale. We needed two teams because there was a steep ravine down the mountain with fields on each side. Some nights the shooting would be on one side, some nights on the opposite side. Lacking portable radios, we made plans to stay on each side of the ravine. Well, our bad luck held out; the night was cold, but there was no activity. I made plans to hit the area the next Saturday evening. I even borrowed some walkie-talkies so we could have some type of communication.



**By Bill Bower**

Wildlife Conservation Officer  
Bradford County

The only thing I hadn't counted on was that that particular Saturday was my wedding anniversary. My wife had invited several friends to our house for supper and a little celebration. (If I learned anything out of this incident, it was that wives put more emphasis on wedding anniversaries than husbands do!) My wife just couldn't understand how I was going to work on our anniversary. Actually, through the years she has been a very understanding wife. I knew she was just kidding and rubbing it in, because I was going to go stand on the side of the mountain instead of staying home with her on our anniversary. (You were kidding, weren't you, "Kid"?)

The deputies and I got into our positions, two on one side of the ravine and two on the other. The January night did not disappoint us, cold again. There was about six inches of snow, which transformed the mountainside into a winter wonderland. Time goes very slowly, even in a wonderland, when you're waiting on the side of a mountain in the middle of a January night. Fingers and toes tingle; noses run. After a few hours there was still no activity. I got on the walkie-talkie and called the other deputies. "Do you think it's time to pull out? I'm frozen!" "Yeah, okay. We'll meet you at the top of the mountain." I told my partner Jerry Ross that we'd better get to the vehicle first,

before the other team finished our thermos of coffee. Ross and I had just started up the mountain when John Parsell radioed, "Wait! We have a light coming!" Ross and I quickly got back to our stations.

Parsell then came on the air again. "They just shot! Two men are using a 22 rifle."

"Okay, John, we're coming across the ravine. Try to keep an eye on them."

Ross and I were about to the bottom of the ravine when John came on the air again. "They shot again, but we can't see what they're shooting at. Wait a minute! They're coming right toward us. We're in the middle of the field, they're going to spot us!" The radio went silent.

"Come on!" Ross and I scampered out of the ravine, trying not to use our lights or make too much noise. Several minutes passed by. It seemed like an hour.

When John came on the radio again, he sounded excited. He told us the men had shot again, this time toward him and Dale. They heard the shot go whining by, which means it was close. John and Dale Yale, the other deputy, had flopped down in the snowy field and had the two men come within ten yards of them. Somehow, the pair's flashlight beam did not illuminate the two deputies. John came back on the air and said, "We still can't see what they're shooting!"

By this time, Ross and I had crossed part of the open field and could see the flashlight beam working back and forth. We started to follow. The two men left the field and went across a small brushy fencerow with a barbed wire fence in it. Several times we heard the report of a 22, but still couldn't see what they were shooting at. Ross and I made it through the fence and were in the other field. The light was still working but now, instead of going away from us it was coming our way. More shots. This time we heard the whine of a ricocheting bullet. Ross suggested we take cover, so we lay down in the snow. But when they continued coming our way we decided to get back across the fence. Trying to crawl backward on hands and knees, through a barbed wire fence at night, is not easy. Ross made it through but the wire caught me by the seat of the pants. I tore myself loose and we found some cover in the fencerow. The two men came close, but we couldn't see who they were. They stood for awhile, as if contemplating what to do. We could hear their

muted voices, but not well enough to understand what they were saying. All of a sudden the men turned out the light and started down the hill. We followed closely until, snap, I stepped on a twig. The men wheeled around but Ross and I had already taken cover. The two quickly started downhill again, and Ross suggested we stop them.

"Did you see a deer?" I asked.

"No," he admitted.

I radioed Parsell and Yale and asked if they had seen any deer. All they had found was fresh blood in a deer track and not much, only a spot now and then. My mind kept running through the evidence we had and I kept asking myself if it was enough to convict these men if we went to court. As it was still legal to hunt raccoons, I suspected the men would use that as an alibi if confronted.

Ross didn't help things when he exclaimed, "If we're going to stop them, we'll have to do it soon."

An officer's life is loaded with quick decisions of all types, some good, some bad. I knew it would be better if we could testify that we had seen their light cast on a deer. "Let's let them go. They don't know we're here. They'll be back," I decided.

We watched the two men disappear into a trailer court, but couldn't even see which trailer they went into.

The walk up the mountain was long and cold. The wind seemed to blow much harder—especially at the seat of my pants. After meeting the other two deputies at the car and discussing the situation, their opinion, of course, was that we should have stopped them.

"Naw," I said, "They'll be back."

Well, as you can guess, the men never did come back. I don't know why, but I surmise that someone picked us up on the walkie-talkies, heard our conversation, and told the two men. I'm not sure. The only thing I am sure of was that we spent several more cold nights on the hill. My informant never called again, and my deputies never let me forget my words: "Naw, they'll be back!"

Sometimes a decision is right. Sometimes it's wrong. Either way, when you're making the call, you have to live with it.

I wish I could say I knew who the men were. I wish I could say I apprehended them the next year. But I can't. One thing I do know—if it happens again, *I'll be back*. But I hope it's not on my wedding anniversary.



# Thornapples



Chuck Fergus

**H**OW DID THE kingbird get its name? From the imperious way it drives other creatures away from its nest? No, says Ernest Choate in a weighty little book, *The Dictionary of American Bird Names*; the kingbird is named for the crown of red-gold feathers on its otherwise gray head.

The ring-necked pheasant? "Pheasant" comes from the Greek *phasianos*, "bird of Phasia," a fowl that lived along the Phasis River in the Caucasus region of present-day Soviet Russia. "Ring-necked" for the band of white feathering around its neck, of course.

As you may have guessed, the turkey is named for the country in Central Asia that is home to the Turks. Except the turkey doesn't come from Central Asia; it comes from America. The Spanish conquistadors pilfered turkeys from the Aztecs (who had domesticated the birds), took them back to Spain, sold them across the continent to the Turks, who probably jacked up the price and passed them off on the English, who landed at Plymouth Rock, saw the wild version of their tame birds trotting around in the woods, said, "Great Scott! Turkeys!", and grabbed for their blunderbusses.

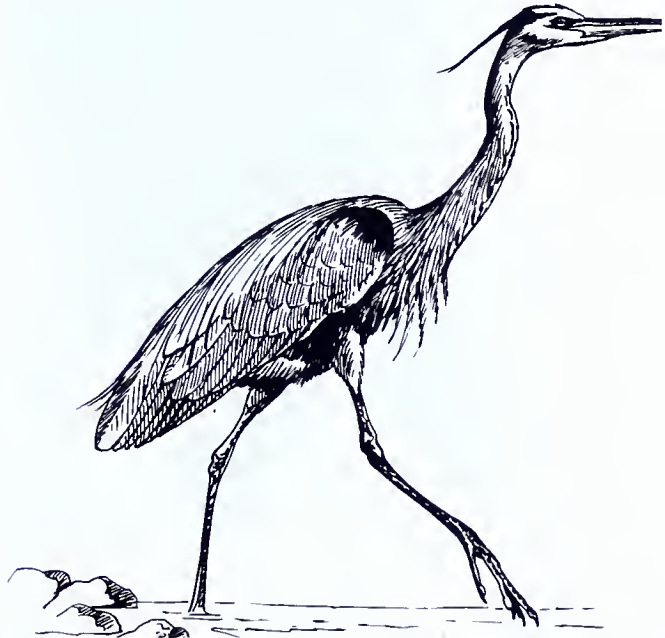
I had always wondered about the bufflehead, a type of sea duck. It turns out that the shape of the fowl's head suggested that of a buffalo to what must have been rather credulous observers. There is also the "buffalo-

bird," which would follow buffalo around, feeding on insects that the beasts' hooves drummed up. Now that the buffalo are gone, the bird's name has become more prosaic: cowbird.

"Sparrow" derives from the Anglo-Saxon *spearwa*, "flutterer," applied to any small nondescript bird, like our "spotsie" or "dickeybird" today. "Shrike" is Anglo-Saxon *scric*, "shrieker." "Skua" evolved from the Old Norse *skufr*, or "tassel." The skua is a big, brownish gull that preys on other birds. My wife and I saw skuas all over Iceland, and the bird in flight really does look like a tassel bouncing in the wind.

The bittern, a cryptically colored marsh bird, has a mighty if not a mellifluous voice. "Bittern" comes from Vulgar Latin *butitaurus*, "bird that bellows like a bull." The bird's vocalizing is further described by its common names, bog bumper, thunder pumper, stake driver, water belcher.

While in the marsh, let us consider the herons. The origin of "heron" is probably the Frankish *haigro*, which has to do with clearing the throat. (Hérons, close cousins to bitterns, are not very musical birds either.) The great blue heron is named for its size and color; in some locales it is called "poor Joe," and in others "big cranky," for its lonely habitat and standoffish disposition.



The Louisiana heron (now officially designated the tricolored heron) was named by the “Father of American Ornithology,” Alexander Wilson, who liked to link birds to the places where they were first found. The Louisiana heron was originally collected not in the state of Louisiana, but somewhere in the vast realm of the Louisiana Purchase, by members of the Lewis and Clark expedition. (Wilson also named the magnolia warbler, after potting the first, or “type,” specimen out of a magnolia tree.)

### Onomatopoeic

The shoveler’s bill looks like a shovel; the turnstone uses its bill to flip stones over in search of food; the spoonbill has a wide, flattened end to its bill, used for straining; and “sickle bill” is a local name for the curlew, which hunts insects in the grass. “Curlew” is itself onomatopoeic, echoing the bird’s call.

Many other birds have named themselves, including the bobwhite, willet, killdeer, kittiwake, cuckoo (also known as the “rain crow” from a folk belief that its calling forecasts rain), towhee

(“chewink” is another name, another rendition of its call), pewee, phoebe, dickcissel, chickadee, chuck-will’s-widow, whippoorwill, and pauraque.

The pauraque, chuck-will’s-widow, whippoorwill, and nighthawk are known collectively as “goatsuckers.” For that odd—and baseless—appellation our thanks must go to Aristotle, who wrote about the nightjar, a European “goatsucker”: “flying to the udders of she-goats, it [sucks] them and so gets its name.”

I always thought the loon was named for its call, which sounds like lunatic laughter. In fact, “lunatic” means “moonstruck,” from the Latin *luna*, moon. “Loon,” according to Edward Gruson in *Words for Birds*, stems from *lomr*, Old Norse for “diving bird” or “water bird.”

A veritable flock of birds have peoples’ names attached. Cooper’s hawk: William Cooper, American zoologist; in the early 1800s he collected the first *Accipiter cooperi* and was commemorated in both its scientific and common names. Bonaparte’s gull: Charles Lucien Jules Laurent Bonaparte, Prince





of Canino and Musignano, in Italy, and Napoleon's nephew; a contemporary of Cooper, Bonaparte lived for seven years in New Jersey and Philadelphia and is considered the "father of systematic ornithology" in America. Bachman's warbler: the Reverend John Bachman, 1790–1874, Lutheran clergyman of South Carolina, an able, ardent naturalist said to be something of a stick-in-the-mud; two of his daughters married sons of famed bird painter John James Audubon (Audubon's shearwater, Audubon's warbler). Forster's tern: Johann Reinhold Forster, 1729–1798, accompanied Captain James Cook on his second voyage around the world; Forster complained bitterly about having to bunk with the crew, but ultimately had a bird named in his honor.

A name that had long puzzled me is "nuthatch." The nuthatch is a pretty sharp customer, not likely to try sitting on a nut to hatch it. Turns out that the name celebrates the bird's ingenuity, "hatch" being a corruption of "hack," from the nuthatch's habit of wedging a nut into the bark of a tree and then hacking the shell off with its beak. The nuthatch is also known in some regions as "devil downhead," for going down tree trunks headfirst, like a daredevil.

Names dealing with physical traits or behavior often are easy to interpret. Bluebird, goldeneye, yellowthroat, gnatcatcher, flycatcher, creeper, mockingbird, swift (a fast flier), sapsucker (actually this little woodpecker laps up, rather than sucks, the sap that oozes from holes it pecks in trees). Oystercatcher. The early naturalist Elliott Coues (Coues' flycatcher) wrote that "oyster opener would be a better name, as oysters do not run fast."

"Raven" imitates the bird's call (from Old Norse *hraf*); so does "crow" (Anglo-Saxon *crawe*), although, notes Choate, "we find it comfortable to say 'a crow caws' and 'a rooster crows.'" "Vireo" sounds like a bird's call but is actually a Latin word meaning "green-finch"—vireos are not finches, but most are one shade or another of green.

The robin is an interesting case, so dubbed by English settlers to whom it recalled the well-loved red-breasted bird called robin back home. Robin is a diminutive for Robert—a nickname, a pet name. What started as redbreast became robin redbreast and ended up simply as robin, the male counterpart of "Jenny wren."

I've been watching a bird lately, a small, tawny-breasted denizen of places thick and uncivil. I refer to the woodcock: "wood" for its sylvan (actually, brushy) habitat, "cock" from Old French *coc*, a word imitating a common bird call. I must report that the woodcock male on his springtime display flight gives voice to a sonorous liquid chirping far lovelier than any cluck.

### Small Bird

Titmouse: a combination of Icelandic *tittr*, anything small, and Anglo-Saxon *mase*, meaning a small bird. (The true plural, says Choate, should be titmouses.) Tanager is from *tangara*, the bird's name in Tupi, a South American tongue. Ovenbird for the bird's forest-floor nest, which resembles a miniature Dutch oven. The ovenbird is the "teacher bird" for its "teacher, teacher, teacher" call—the titmouse is the "Peter bird" for the same reason.

"Owl" is imitative and stretches all the way back to the Sanskrit *uluka*. Hereabouts we have the barn owl (for its favorite nesting place), the screech owl (a misnomer: the "screech" is a wavery but nonetheless musical trill), and the saw-whet owl, whose call resembles a saw being sharpened with a file.

I can't explain all of the bird names in this short article, and indeed many have not been traced. If I have whetted your curiosity, that's enough. It's springtime out there. Go and find a "high-hole" and watch the flicker flick. When you hear a catbird, hearken to its meow. And should you figure out why the woodcock is also called the "timberdoodle," I want to be the first to know.



*A bow hunting assist . . .*

## *Call of the Deer*

By Keith C. Schuyler

**I**T WAS A long time ago, with no immediately apparent reason, that a doe came hurrying by a spot I had chosen among some hemlock trees. It was a stand in a forest primarily of deciduous trees, where the browse line was so high there were few places an archer could conceal himself. It was tough hunting even though that morning I had several hundred private acres all to myself.

### **More Puzzling**

That made the doe's action even more puzzling. But, within moments, a fine 8-point showed himself, hot on her trail. His nose barely cleared the ground as he emitted a continuous series of low short grunts, much like those of a foraging pig. I had never heard that before, but there was no doubt in my mind about what the buck had on his. I couldn't bring myself to raise the bow and perhaps break up that budding romance.

My patience was rewarded about fif-

teen minutes later, when I dropped a heavy-racked 6-point at 40 yards.

More recently, on the final day of last year's fall archery season, darkness caught two of us on the way out of a remote woods. On our way we heard one or more deer walking in the leaves. Instinctively, although it was completely dark, we stopped. I grunted softly, then louder, and then vigorously beat a tree with a dead stick. We could hear more deer on the opposite side of us. Then we heard at least one actually running toward us. Although we couldn't see any of them, we had deer on three sides despite, or because of, the considerable commotion I was creating.

Some years ago I had a driven buck run right up to me, drop his nose to the ground, and start grunting not more than fifteen feet from my hunting boots. It was not a dumb yearling, but a fairly large deer with about 8 points on a nice rack. I will never know whether it suddenly hit the scent of



**DEER CALLS**, properly used at the right time, can be effective. They provide an extra dimension in the ongoing effort to beat deer at their own game. But you'd better be good.

a doe in estrus or something else prompted that unusual behavior. No, I didn't get him.

On two Michigan hunts, where the early archery season generally coincides with Pennsylvania's, but where deer rutting starts earlier because of its more northern latitude, two separate happenings involved friends whose words I accept.

In one instance, the hunter observed a buck about 100 yards from his tree-stand. He had just acquired a commercial deer call and decided to give it a try. On the very first series of grunts, the buck came straight to his tree and he shot it. In the other situation, a spike buck was hanging around on the fringes of the bow hunter's practical shooting range. He used another make of commercial caller. The buck responded promptly, but the shot was a bit off and the animal ran to a safe distance. However, the call kept the spike from leaving the area, although it would not come in again close enough for a second shot.

Those accounts, which I believe to be true, are given to introduce the subject of deer calls as they relate to Pennsylvania white-tailed deer hunting in the archery season.

Now, before you tear out to spend your tax refund on a commercial call, let's take a look at the somewhat limited information available on this new look at an old device. Indians, it's been said, could call deer and many other wild creatures by mouth and other means. But beware of commercial pur-



vveyors who advertise a deer call as the answer to a bow hunter's prayer.

The honest ones will tell you that, so far as is known, the effectiveness of deer calls depends upon the rutting season, the mating period of white-tails. A call is intended to simulate the sound a buck makes when pursuing a receptive female. The grunt, it seems, alerts other bucks that they might be missing something, and it may entice one or more to investigate. Being highly competitive, a responding buck may come ready to do combat, providing his adversary is not too big.

Veteran Pennsylvania hunters may question all this because few have actually heard a buck grunt. Why?

First, the sound is not loud, a point to keep in mind if you attempt to employ it. Further, because it is heard only during the rutting season, and November is the height of the period, deer hunters are not likely to hear it except during the last days of October or the beginning of December. Archers are most likely to find use for a grunt-



ing call during the tail end of the October season. When rutting season carries over into December, the number of hunters and the noise of gun shooting are apt to discourage bucks from amorous attempts. Furthermore, gunners can reach deer beyond the distance a grunt call might be effective.

Finally, unless you are aware of such sounds, they may escape your hearing. Our ears are more attuned to the breaking of twigs, the sound of dry leaves being shuffled, or the soft trip of hooves over a wet or snow-carpeted forest floor.

One thing seems evident, though. If not overdone, a grunt call will almost always stop even a female deer if it is not in determined flight. It does not seem to alarm them. At times, possibly when receptive, a doe will respond to the call and come within bow range. At other times, she will look in the direction from which the call originates and then resume walking.

One disadvantage must be considered. If the deer is responding to the call, it will usually come straight in to seek its source. That means it will probably present a frontal shot — among the worst for an archer. Under such circumstances, an archer should wait for the deer to turn broadside. Also for that reason an archer should stop calling when he sees a deer coming in.

Not always is the deer you are trying to bring in the only one that responds. Consequently, it pays to be alert for others that might come in from any direction. In fact, occasional calling might bring action when no deer are in evidence. If you purchase a call, you

should experiment with it in November, in areas where rubs and scrapes indicate the presence of male deer.

Don't overdo it at any one time. Rather, use a short series of low-pitched, abbreviated grunts. Experiment with the device to get that result. Cupping the hands around the end of the call often helps to produce the right sound. Using both hands should present no real problem, as you should not call when the deer is approaching your stand.

Personally, I can get the sound I want by voice alone, by making a guttural grunt. After you've heard a buck grunt, it's easier to simulate the sound, and there are records and tapes that reproduce it.

Not all deer calls produce the grunt. Some simulate the low moaning sound does occasionally make, apparently to keep their fawns in tow. That sound does bring in bucks on occasion. Others are designed to attract does by producing a bleat that represents a lost fawn. I've attempted those calls, with a respectable imitation by voice, but without success.

As with some scents, it is personal belief that deer may respond at times out of curiosity. But, whereas scents are passive attractors that remain where they are placed, a contrived call can be an aural insult to the semi-stillness of the forest or woodlot.

There is no question here that deer calls, properly used at the right time, can be effective. They provide an extra dimension in the ongoing effort to beat deer at their own game. But you'd better be good.

## **Northeast Raptor Management Symposium and Workshop**

The National Wildlife Federation's Institute for Wildlife Research is hosting a Northeast Raptor Management Symposium and Workshop at Syracuse, New York, on May 16 to 18, 1988. The symposium will feature technical papers on the status and management of northeastern raptors and land use issues that affect them. During the workshop, participants will discuss raptor management issues. For more information write the National Wildlife Federation, 1412 16th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036-2266, or call 703-790-4264.



# New in 1988

By Don Lewis

**W**HEN I attended a Remington press briefing in April 1987, in Ilion, New York, along with other gunwriters and editors from around the nation, Remington announced it would have a 10-gauge autoloading shotgun on the market by mid-1988. That was particularly good news for turkey and waterfowl hunters.

At the same briefing Remington unveiled Phase I of a new \$10 million Flexible Manufacturing System (FMS). Phase II will cost another \$8 million.

FMS is a grouping of computer-controlled, semi-independent work stations linked by an automated material handling system. It is designed to produce a wide variety of parts simultaneously.

The fully automated system reduces changeover time from six days to four hours and lessens the time it takes to introduce new products from 18 months to six months. There will, how-

ever, be no sacrifice in quality. Parts are computer-measured to ensure consistent quality and acceptable tolerances.

Last November Remington announced more offerings for 1988. For instance, a new Model 870 Express pump shotgun with an extra deer barrel should warm the hearts of shotgunners who use slugs or buckshot. Nickel-plated buckshot loads will be available from Remington this year, and several new bullets will be added to the line of 7mm (28-caliber) rounds.

## 35 Whelen

Standardizing the old 35 Whelen wildcat, which dates back to 1922, along with offering it in the Model 7600 pump action rifle and in a Model 700 Classic Limited Edition, will bring back good memories to thousands of older hunters. Remington will also produce the Model 700 ADL bolt action rifle with a laminated stock.

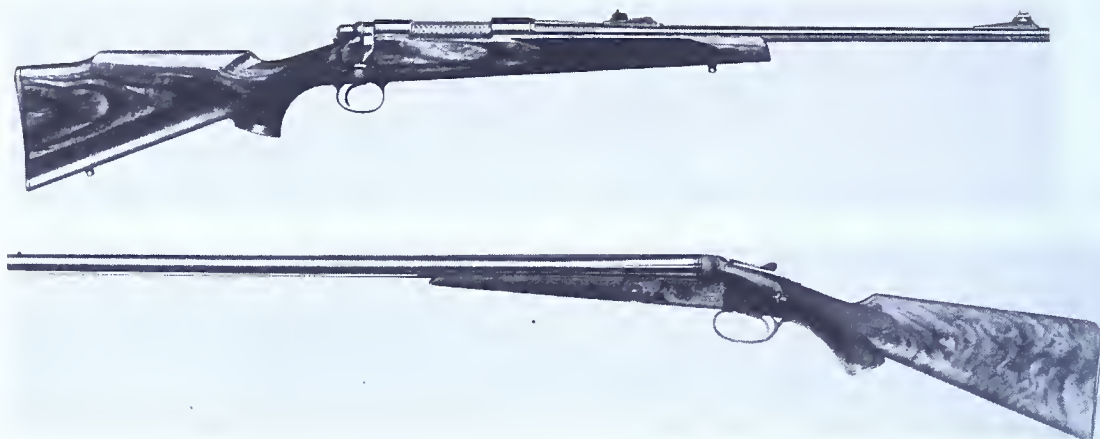
There's good news for magnum rifle fans, too. Beginning this year the highly effective 338 Winchester Magnum cartridge has been given a permanent home among the impressive caliber list of the Model 700 bolt action rifle.

Because of growing interest in the 280 Remington cartridge, it is being offered once more in a pump, this time on a limited, one-year basis in the reliable Model 7600.

Other new offerings from Remington include five additions to its handgun line: two 9mm Luger loads, an 88-grain hollow point and a 115-grain metal case bullet; a 180-grain semi-



**WINCHESTER** invited a dozen gunwriters to East Alton, Illinois, to try new Supreme line of cartridges. Here, **GAME NEWS** editor Bob Bell uses his Hart-barreled M70 to test 308 caliber, while Grits Gresham, next bench, waits his turn.



**THE LAMINATED** stock on Remington's Model 700 ADL "LS", top, will appeal to the increasing number of hunters who favor the stability and durability of synthetic stocks. Parker shotguns are back. Remington will be producing 20-gauge AHE grade Parkers, on a special order basis, in the same handcrafted fashion that decades ago earned Parkers the name "Old Reliable."

jacketed hollow point for the 357 Magnum; a 170-grain semi-jacketed hollow point for the 41 Remington Magnum; and a 210-grain semi-jacketed hollow point for the 44 Remington Magnum.

For shotgunners, the company is bringing out a redesigned model 870 TC trap gun, twelve new steel loads in 10-, 12- and 20-gauge, and two new lead shot combinations added to their Duplex Multirange shotshells.

### 308 Fans

The introduction of a 168-grain boattail hollow point 308 cartridge will please long range riflemen. The new load has excellent accuracy, a muzzle velocity of 2680 fps and a muzzle energy of 2678 fp. At 350 yards velocity is 2060 fps and energy is 1583 fp. Remington says the new 168-grain BTHP offers more retained velocity and energy, along with a flatter trajectory, than the standard 150-grain and 165-grain 308 PSP loads.

The desire by many hunters for a Model 870 shotgun in a more economical package brought about the Model 870 "Express" last year. Basically, this

outfit offers all the features of the standard Model 870, but without the cosmetic frills.

For 1988 the budget-minded shooter can find an even better combination — the Model 870 Combo which includes two easy-to-change barrels. There's a standard 28-inch barrel and a 20-inch barrel with rifle sights and a fixed improved cylinder choke, intended for deer hunters who use slugs or buckshot. Because additional "Rem" chokes can be added to the standard 28-inch barrel, this multi-purpose firearm will be suitable for all upland and waterfowl hunting. The 3-inch chamber will handle all 12-gauge ammo without adjustment.

For some reason I have always been an admirer of the 28-caliber bullet. Maybe I shouldn't say this, but the orphan 284 Winchester is still my favorite deer cartridge. I must admit, though, that Remington's 7mm-08 and 280 loads are top 28-caliber deer cartridges, too, and the past few years have seen a dramatic increase in hunter recognition of the ballistic performance of these cartridges. The growing demand for the 280 Remington is proof that the 28-caliber is not just a passing fancy. In fact, in some areas, the 28-caliber is surpassing such well-established cartridges as the 30-06 and 270 Winchester.

At gun seminars I often suggest young hunters and lady hunters use the





AFTER 66 years as a wildcat, the 35 Whelen is available on a commercial basis. Remington is producing the cartridge along with chamberings for the venerable wildcat in the Model 7600 and the Model 700 Classic.



7mm-08. It's one of the most effective short-action deer cartridges available.

A new 120-grain hollow point load is now offered in 280 and 7mm-08. It combines flat trajectory with excellent wind-bucking characteristics for both deer and varmint hunting. For example, the 120-grain 7mm-08 and 280 Remington loads provide ballistic superiority to the 125-grain 30-06 load, particularly at longer ranges.

Undoubtedly the most popular 28-caliber cartridge is the Remington 7mm Magnum. The addition of a 140-grain load further increases its versatility. This is the same 140-grain PSP bullet that has performed so well in the 7mm-08 and 280 Remington.

I'll touch lightly on the 35 Whelen. I'm sure many young hunters have never heard of it, but is it still a super cartridge. It is essentially a 30-06 case with the neck expanded to accept a 35-caliber bullet. After a distinguished 66-year career as one of America's most popular wildcat big game cartridges, Remington is finally giving the 35 Whelen legitimate status. Two loads will be produced: a 200-grain pointed soft point, with a muzzle velocity of 2675 fps; and a 250-grain soft point, with a muzzle velocity of 2400 fps, both velocities being taken from 24-inch barrels.

Colonel Townsend Whelen, of the U.S. Army Ordnance Department, originally designed a 40-caliber wildcat in the '06 case. The 35 Whelen, created by James Howe—of Griffin and Howe—is a more practical derivation of the 40-caliber cartridge.

With its heavy bullets, the 35 Whelen should appeal to many big game hunters. It's an ideal cartridge for elk, big bears, moose, and similar game in heavy timber. It produces high energy performance in a standard medium-size case, without the jarring recoil of its big belted brothers.

The original Parker is back. It's returning to the American shooting scene in 1988, from the Parker Gun Works Division of the Remington Arms Co. It will be produced in a 20-gauge AHE grade. More on this later. Also, Remington is adding short-action calibers to the Model 700 Mountain Rifle, which will certainly appeal to 243, 7mm-08 and 308 fans.

Space doesn't permit covering all of Remington's new offerings, but I think a lot of Pennsylvania big game hunters will be interested in the Model 700 ADL/LS (laminated stock) outfit. It will be chambered for the 30-06. As I have explained before, firearms with synthetic stocks are unaffected by changes in temperature and humidity, which means they retain a constant zero. Although many shooters dislike synthetic or fiberglass stocks because they lack warmth and beauty, there's no denying that they do eliminate several problems. The Remington stock is produced by laminating alternating strips of light and dark wood, and then impregnating it with a phenolic resin for even greater stability.

Remington chose to use brown wood tones rather than some nontraditional colors, resulting in a stock with handsome grain and appearance and greater strength than regular wood.

Winchester

U.S. Repeating Arms is offering their



**SUPREME**, Winchester's new line of top quality cartridges, offers many of the same performance attributes that previously have been available only to reloaders.

broadest line of Winchester bolt actions ever. Model 70 XTR Featherweight is truly a superb rifle. Assembly, stock fitting and exceptional finishing are accomplished with traditional hand-crafted care, made better by modern production techniques and new computer technology.

The Model 70 Winlite rifle combines the best features of the Model 70 Featherweight and Sporter rifles plus the advantages of a premium McMillan fiberglass stock, which was originally developed for accuracy-demanding benchrest shooting.

### Seven Popular Calibers

Winlite rifles are offered in seven popular hunting calibers: 270 Winchester, 280 Remington, and 30-06 Springfield come with featherweight 22-inch hammer-forged barrels; 7mm Remington, 300 Winchester Magnum, 300 Weatherby Magnum (a new chambering here), and 338 Winchester Magnum have heavier sporter 24-inch barrels.

Winchester's new Win-Tuff Model 70 Featherweight rifle features a laminated one-piece stock. Win-Tuff bonds dye-shaded brown hardwood with multiple layers of fortified melamine to

create a warm natural look. The stock's overall appearance is interestingly innovative, yet retains the tradition and feel of woods. The new entry has a 22-inch barrel and is chambered for the 243, 270 and 30-06. It weighs (with no sights) a mere 6½ pounds.

Winchester is changing the Model 94 lever action rifle. There's no argument the Model 94 is the most popular sporting rifle ever built. Roughly seven million have been sold since its introduction in 1894, and I'm sure there are more in the field today than any other rifle ever made.

Winchester is offering seven versions of the Model 94 for 1988, including the Model 94 Big Bore rifle. There is even a Model 94 Win-Tuff with a laminated stock and forearm.

For those hunters who want outstanding performance without the chore of reloading, Winchester is offering a new line of top quality rifle cartridges. Called Supreme, the cartridges are the result of years of research in which great care was expended to match accuracy, downrange performance and mushrooming characteristics, the three factors that ultimately influence hunter shooting success in the field.

Cartridges currently available in the Supreme line are 140-grain 270 Winchester, 180-grain 308 Winchester, 165-grain and 180-grain 30-06 Springfield, and 190-grain 300 Winchester Magnum, each featuring Winchester's new Silvertip boattail bullets. Others in the Supreme line are 22-250 Remington with a 52-grain hollow point boattail, 243 Winchester with 100-grain soft point boattail, and the 30-30 Winchester with a 150-grain Silvertip.

### Marlin

Marlin also is introducing new models. The Model 336LTS is a compact version of the famous 336 lever action carbine. It's built for lightning fast action, thanks to its 16¼-inch barrel and scaled-down forearm. Available in 30-30, it features an American black walnut stock, a rubber butt pad,





MARLIN'S introduction of the Model 1894 CL, top, chambered for the 25-20 Winchester and the 32-20 Winchester, and the Model 1894S, beneath, chambered for the 45 Long Colt, will give lever action fans plenty to choose from.

5-round tubular magazine and Micro-Groove rifling.

No modern rifle is more appealing to me than Marlin's new 1894CL. Chambered for two famous old cartridges, the 25-20 Winchester and the 32-20 Winchester, the rifle is a reproduction of an early, original Marlin. It features a straight-grip stock and a tapered forearm of American black walnut. A squared lever, hard rubber buttplate, 22-inch barrel and 6-round tubular magazine complete the elegant look and feel of this recreated classic.

### Ithaca

Ithaca Acquisition Corp. announces a firearms breakthrough: They are still making guns like they used to be made.

In an age when gun manufacturers are switching to computers and robots, Ithaca assures the hunter and shooter that at least one company is still making guns the old-fashioned way. Even the equipment used is much the same as 50 years ago. Today, as back in 1937, all metal parts are milled from solid blocks of ordnance grade steel. The

Model 87 pump action shotgun sports a stock fashioned from high grade American walnut. All fit and finish work is done by hand to ensure lasting quality. On top of all that, the men and women working for Ithaca average 20 years experience. Ithaca says its Model 87, with its hammer-forged barrel, exemplifies the company's commitment to quality.

According to Ithaca, the Model 87 Supreme is built just like the legendary Model 37. They also offer a complete line of field grade Model 87s.

The company also has added a new twist to rifled slug performance with the Deerslayer II—a slug gun with a rifled barrel and integral frame.

I've just scratched the surface. A half-dozen other gun manufacturers will have new items this year. Most manufacturers are working overtime to keep gun and ammo prices affordable, and I've noticed new emphasis is being put on rifled slug and buckshot guns and loads. In summing it up, 1988 should be a banner year for the hunter and shooter.

# *In the wind*

bob mitchell



Moose and bear harvest records were broken in Maine last year, and the deer harvest was 23 percent greater than 1986's. At least 2200 bears were taken in 1987, breaking the previous record of 1954 set in 1986. The moose harvest was 891, eight more than the previous record attained in 1982. The high deer harvest—at least 23,687—is attributed to an increase in the number of any-deer permits issued.

**Hunting-related deaths dropped to a record low in North Carolina last year, when fluorescent orange first became mandatory for big game hunters. In 1987 there were four deaths, and none of the victims was wearing fluorescent orange. The number of accidents dropped, too, from 37 in 1986 to 20 last year.**

As a result of two widely publicized multiple murders, the 3 million residents of the Australian state of New South Wales have been ordered to surrender their firearms. As reported in *Gun Week*, only farmers—who use shotguns and rifles to control vermin—and licensed members of shooting clubs will be allowed to retain their firearms. A fine of \$700 faces those who don't comply.

A peregrine falcon hacked in Tennessee was subsequently trapped and released near New Haven, Connecticut. The falcon is one of 18 released in Tennessee during a 4-year period, and one of only two located after release. The other was found dead along a roadside in the Smoky Mountains National Park.

As reported by the Wildlife Management Institute, South Dakota is embarking on a program that is expected to increase pheasant numbers from 2.6 million to 10 million. The state's Department of Game, Fish and Parks, with support from 18 organizations, intends to develop pheasant habitat on a half-million acres of Conservation Reserve land, spend \$1.5 million on improving habitat on existing Game Production Areas, purchase new areas, and continue work on restocking and predator control.

In conjunction with "Get the Drift and Bag It," a national campaign to clean coastal areas, 650 volunteers in Delaware picked up 8763 pounds of trash in just three hours. Furthermore, volunteers recorded the locations in which various kinds of trash were found to help the state best place trash cans, "Do Not Litter" signs, and other control devices.

In response to the report by the President's Commission on Americans Outdoors, the U.S. Forest Service is developing plans to increase outdoor recreation opportunities on National Forests. According to the Wildlife Management Institute, six commissions have been formed to evaluate "customers, partnerships, settings, services, marketing, and technology." Totalling 192 million acres—over 8 percent of the U.S. land area—National Forests already are providing a significant amount of outdoor recreation opportunities. They contain 80 percent of the Wilderness areas in the lower 48 states, over half of the country's Wild and Scenic Rivers system, 100,000 miles of hiking and riding trails, and, for the most part, are open to public hunting and fishing.

**The Aluminum Association reports that 33.3 billion aluminum cans (140 for every person in the country) were recycled in 1986, representing a 50 percent recycling rate. A decade earlier, only 5 billion cans, 25 percent of those produced, were recycled.**

The Chinese are taking panda poaching seriously. For killing and selling at least 19 giant pandas since 1985, 26 gang members were given life sentences. Death sentences, it was reported, will be given in the most serious poaching cases.





*The Wingless Crow*, by Chuck Fergus, is a collection of thirty-three Thornapples columns which have appeared in GAME NEWS. The nearly 200 pages of entertaining reading will appeal to Fergus fans as they reread these selected essays as well as to those who've yet to discover the joys of Thornapples. This top quality hardcover books costs \$10, delivered, and can be ordered from the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept AR, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.



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PENNSYLVANIA GAME NEWS (ISSN 0031-451X) is published monthly for \$6.00 per year, \$16.50 for three years, or membership in Pennsylvania's Cooperative Farm-Game Project or Safety Zone Project; to Canada and all other foreign countries, \$7.00 U.S. currency, per year. Published by the Pennsylvania Game Commission, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, Pa. 17110-9797. Phone (717) 787-4250. Second-class postage paid at Harrisburg, Pa. CHANGE OF ADDRESS: POSTMASTER: Send both old and new addresses to Pennsylvania Game Commission. Allow six weeks for processing. Material accepted is subject to our requirements for editing and revising. Author payment covers all rights and title to accepted material, including manuscripts, photographs, drawings and illustrations. No information contained in this magazine may be used for advertising or commercial purposes. Copyright © 1988 by the Pennsylvania Game Commission. All rights reserved.

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## Cover Both Angles

**S**PRING TURKEY hunting in Pennsylvania has certainly grown in popularity since the first season two decades ago. The success of the agency's trap and transfer program has resulted in viable turkey flocks within easy reach of nearly every hunter in the state, and sportsmen have taken to the sport with great enthusiasm.

Attendant to this rapid popularity, however, has been an inordinate number of hunting accidents. According to the 1987 report of hunting accidents (see page 39) turkey hunting is three times more dangerous than deer hunting. It's not that turkey hunting is particularly dangerous, it's the discrepancy between accident rates that suggests room for improvement.

The reasons for this discrepancy lie in the way the sport is practiced. Turkey hunting, we make ourselves as inconspicuous as possible, and then make as precisely as possible, the very sounds of the animal we and everybody else in the woods is so eagerly anxious to shoot. Because of those techniques we must adjust our hunting safety tactics accordingly.

Turkey hunting is unlike rabbit hunting, deer hunting, or nearly every other form of hunting. While rabbit hunting, we use care not to shoot towards our buddy, maybe 20 feet away (and probably wearing fluorescent orange). Deer hunting, we're continually watching, fully cognizant of the whereabouts of every nearby hunter (they're wearing fluorescent orange, too). Turkey hunting, however, is different. Surprises occur. Hunters are shooting other hunters, at close ranges, normally with neither the offender or victim being aware of the other's presence.

Some say victims have to assume some of the blame because their very actions encourage accidents. Maybe. Others say shooters are to blame because they obviously aren't sure of their targets. True. But, realistically, neither the problem nor the solution is that simple. The mind plays curious tricks, especially when a hunter is excited by the prospects of bagging a big boss gobbler.

A review of hunting accident reports yields the following: offender mistook red hunting license holder for a turkey's head; victim was shot as he attempted to unsnap seat from camo vest; offender mistook two hunters for strutting toms; offender mistook a red patch for a turkey's head and neck; and, victim bent down to go under a branch and was shot. It happens: sane rational hunters are mistaking other hunters for bearded turkeys. It can happen to any of us.

Accepting that fact is what's important. We have to hunt "defensively." We have to not only avoid becoming an offender, like we routinely do in all forms of hunting, but to also avoid becoming a victim, something we don't have to give as much thought to while hunting other game. To avoid shooting another turkey hunter we have to be doubly sure that what we're so intent on shooting is really a legal bearded tom, not a license holder or just a dark object. To avoid becoming a victim, select a stand with safety in mind and consider fluorescent orange. Prove to yourself whether or not the safety color is a hindrance. A fluorescent orange camo garment or the use of an orange band around a nearby tree to alert other hunters are good ideas.

Turkey hunting has become a modern day wildlife management success story. There is, however, for this relatively new activity, room for improvement when it comes to safety. And it's up to each of us, as individuals, to make those improvements. — *Bob Mitchell*





**WHEN YOU** call on landowners be neatly dressed, remove your hat, and be courteous. Tell them who you are and where you live. Remember, you are a stranger, they never saw you before.

# LANDOWNER'S PERMISSION

## How To Obtain It

**By Charles E. Travis, Jr.**

**I'D LIKE** to discuss one of the most important aspects of trapping—securing landowner permission. It isn't always easy, and there's no doubt knocking on doors to ask trapping permission is the one part of the sport I dislike. Nevertheless, permission is essential. We can do a lot for ourselves when seeking permission by heeding a few suggestions.

Often, the only contact a landowner has with trapping and trappers is with us, the ones who ask for permission. It's important, therefore, that we make a favorable impression, whether we get permission or not. It's surprising how many people are unaware that trapping still exists. Many seem to think trapping went out when the West was won.

When you call on a landowner dress neat. You don't have to be all duded up, but you should definitely be presentable. You older fellows, if you have a beard or mustache, be sure it's neatly trimmed. If you're wearing a hat, take it off when the person opens the door—it's more impressive if they see you actually remove it.

### **Demonstrate Respect**

Don't drive up to the house in a cloud of dust. Driving slowly is a good way of demonstrating your respect and concern for the landowner, his family and property.

Be courteous. That's most important. Tell them who you are and where you live. Don't be hesitant to say yes sir and yes mam, no sir and no mam, and





**FINALLY**, express your gratitude in a small way at the end of the season. For you youngsters, a handwritten note or a personal visit is appropriate. For you older fellows, a small gift is always appreciated with a feeling of goodwill.

don't care about your skills as a trapper, they're more interested in your visual and verbal presentation. Also, don't take somebody else with you. You will do better in a one on one situation. Two or three strangers would likely make the landowner uneasy.

Once you have gained permission treat the land with utmost respect. If you betray the landowner's trust, you'll give not only yourself a bad name but also all your fellow trappers. Respect fences and gates, do not block drive-ways, don't drive on fields without advance clearance, and avoid all livestock and pet areas when setting your traps. Finally, never litter.

It is a good idea to keep a written record of where you have set each trap. Records can be invaluable should an emergency arise and somebody else must tend your traps. At the end of the season, or when you quit for the season, be *SURE* you remove each and every trap, stake wire and all other materials you may have used on that land. Failure to clean up can result in a lot of trouble, some of it serious. Two such examples come to mind. First, a dairy farmer had a very valuable cow die for no apparent reason. An autopsy revealed that the cow had ingested a piece of wire similar to the type sometimes used to bale hay. This farmer, however, used twine to bale all of his hay, but he did remember that the winter before he saw a fellow tending traps in his hay field. Although not known for certain, it seemed the trapper had left some wire in the field that was later picked up by the hay baler and ended up in the cow.

Second, another farmer was plowing and found one of his tractor tires—one of those about six feet tall and as big around as my chest—had been punctured by an 18-inch metal rod. Some irresponsible individual appar-

please and thank you. Yeah, nope and huh sound pretty crude, wouldn't you say?

Don't appear disappointed or act rudely if you are denied permission. Remember, you are a stranger, they never saw you before. It's up to you to sell yourself. If the owner doesn't give you a reason for his denial, ask him, in a calm voice, why. If you have done your home work you might be able to change his or her mind.

### The Facts

I always give some factual trapping literature to every landowner I contact, for them to look over at their leisure after I have left. It explains, in simple terms, what wildlife management is and the role trapping plays. It also explains what happens when, without management, overpopulations occur. Also, I leave them my name card with my phone number on it. More than once a person who had refused me permission called me to say he had had a chance to look the material over and that it gave him a different outlook on the subject, and that yes, it would be okay for me to trap on their property.

Particularly you older fellows, don't brag about how good a trapper you are (real or imagined). Most landowners



ently had left the stake in the ground and it ripped the hole in the tractor tire. In reconstructing the cause of the damage it seemed the fellow trapping (without permission) was unable to remove the stake, no doubt due to the ground being frozen. With a pair of 10-inch vise grips and a hammer or an ax he could have removed the stake in a couple of minutes. It's a sure bet that permission to trap on either of those two farms is going to be very difficult to obtain, and I'm sure both land-owners are closely watching everybody who comes on their land.

As you can see, these things are just common sense. Getting permission boils down to demonstrating you're a sincere, upright, and honest person who wants to use another's land in an ethical manner.

Finally, it would be a nice gesture if you would express your gratitude in a small way at the end of the season. For



you youngsters, a handwritten thank you note or a personal visit is appropriate. For you older fellows—with money in your pockets—a box of good candy, cookies or a fruit cake is always appreciated with a feeling of genuine goodwill. Also, while showing your thanks is a good time to ask for next year's permission. If you have done your part you will have no problem, believe me.

## ***GAMEcooking Tips***

### **Venison Scallopini**

If you butcher your own venison, then you know how fast the scrap pan fills up. We all enjoy the venisonburger made from those scraps, but here is a good suggestion for using some of the real lean pieces. We like to make this dish the day after butchering, using the fresh boneless meat before it's frozen.

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup dry white wine
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 1 pound boneless venison steak, trimmed and cut into cubes
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 2 cups prepared spaghetti sauce, or your own
- 1 8-ounce can button mushrooms
- 1 cup fresh mushrooms, sliced very thin
- 3 tablespoons parsley

Combine half the olive oil, the wine, and garlic to make a marinade. Mix well, pour over prepared meat, and let stand at room temperature two to three hours. Place flour and paprika in paper bag. Shake to mix. Remove meat from marinade and pat dry. Pound on both sides to tenderize. Drop into bag of flour, and shake to coat. Brown floured meat in remaining quarter cup of olive oil. Remove meat from skillet and drain. Arrange in a single layer in large frying pan. Pour spaghetti sauce over meat, cover and simmer for one hour. Fifteen minutes before serving, add mushrooms and parsley. Cover frying pan and cook 15 minutes more. Serve immediately. Serves 4.

—FROM WILD GAME COOKERY  
BY CAROL VANCE WARY



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OPCHICK



# Morning Magic

By Wendy Plowman

DON KEPT checking his watch. It was now 4:15 a.m. and John was running late. After agreeing to a four o'clock rendezvous, Don was already getting a major case of jitters. For several days he had formed great expectations about this outing and was emotionally ready to get out into the woods, to relax and unwind after a hectic month with his landscaping business and spring planting. Then in the distance, John's approaching headlights signaled at 4:25. They were barely underway when John announced they had to stop enroute to drop his truck off at a repair shop. Another delay taken care of, John then had the nerve to plead a case for coffee and donuts, resulting in yet another stop. By now, Don was more than eager to get on with the hunt.

Cumberland County farmer, Don Deckman, hunted turkeys in the past, mostly in other states, but rarely as a first priority. On the other hand, he knew John was a die-hard turkey hunter and he wanted to see for himself what serious spring gobbler hunting was all about.

Their destination was the terminus of a hollow between two Perry County ridges. The turkey topography of the area is almost ideal. "Either gobblers are there and you can hear them, or they aren't there and you don't have to waste prime time," John related. They had decided to hunt this area on a weekday rather than risk interference and competition from the weekend crowds.

When they reached the parking area, Don realized he was a novice destined to experience a lesson on very serious hunting. After parking the truck John commanded, "Don't slam the door and be very quiet." Once vests and shotguns were shouldered they trekked silently into the woods, toward unseen

ridges, with first light still some minutes away.

This special morning would prove to be the first huntable daybreak of the week. On this particular dawn weather conditions seemed ideal. After several stormy unsettled days a high pressure had finally taken over. Perhaps there would be no other time in the entire hunting season quite like this. John had hunted here sporadically earlier in the season and worked several gobblers, but failed to connect with any.

## Three Turkeys Gobbled

Leaving Don some distance away, John climbed to the highest rise in a clearing and directed a series of barred owl hoots against the dark ridges. In trying to locate some gobblers, he over-emphasized the final notes of the call. Don thought surely that John was overdoing it just for his benefit. Yet, sure enough, at least three turkeys gobbled back instinctively from their roost. One sounded exceptionally serious, off to their right down in the hollow, but John whispered, "I think he's too far away." With daylight on the way, time was of the essence. Don still wanted to give it a try. The turkeys seemed as anxious as the two hunters. Once prodded awake with the owl hoots, they cranked up with repeated turkey chatter.

The hunters hadn't gone too far when they encountered a stream. John stopped to determine if the closest gobbler was on the opposite side. If so, he was reluctant to attempt coaxing the turkey across the stream, as wary gobblers don't often cooperate under such circumstances.

They retreated back from the noisy stream, to more quiet surroundings, and discovered the old tom was on the same side. John and Don moved in as

close as possible toward the roosted bird. They got to within about 100 yards. The next need was to find an open area on the ridge where they could keep tabs on the area of the roost tree. It was late in the season, and the underbrush was leafed out thick with new growth, making it difficult to see any appreciable distance.

John said quietly, "That turkey is either going to come straight down along our side of the ridge or he's going to slip across the top." The strategy was that John would call the turkey up past Don. So he was positioned along the side of the hill, while John went about 40 yards farther out and off to the side in case Don missed, and where he could still keep track of birds on either



ridge. Don picked out an open area in front of his location that looked ideal for an excited turkey to approach for a look at a hen.

Shortly after they situated themselves, John called carefully, using a combination of Kelly Cooper's box and a Rohm Brothers' double diaphragm mouth call. Don heard one bird fly down from its roost when John called a second time. Suddenly the old gobbler answered him, followed up by a second turkey — obviously a jake chiming in at the end.

In trying to interpret the turkey's intentions, Don realized that the gobbler was going to walk around him and down the ridge to his left, opposite a patch of thick underbrush. He re-

aligned himself against an old white pine so that if the bird did come down into an open area, he could swing to his right, stand up, and still have a clear shot.

John kept calling and the birds continued answering. Sure enough, first the jake came along, plodding ahead of the gobbler toward Don's location. Don was relieved he made the right decision when he switched positions. He couldn't distinctly see the young bird, just a black object moving along the brow of the hill and definitely out of range. Then he managed to get a brief glimpse of the granddaddy gobbler approaching just outside the thick brush. Don reasoned with himself that if the gobbler continued on the same path he would have a chance for a shot just when the bird entered a small clearing. There would be no instant replay possible for him; a miss and then it would be John's chance at the bird.

**LEAVING DON** some distance away, John climbed to the highest rise in a clearing and directed a series of barred owl hoots against the dark ridges. However, he overemphasized the final notes.

As the bird paraded into the small opening some 30 yards away Don squeezed the trigger on his 20-gauge Remington 1100 just as the statuesque red head coincided with the front sight bead. The 19½-pound tom, sporting a nine-inch beard, collapsed with only one BB in the head and one in the neck. John was instantly enroute to the scene while Don had already taken off to retrieve his first spring turkey. After 20 minutes of calming down, and all the congratulations were exchanged, Don excitedly tagged his turkey and packed up for a return to the truck.

It was still early, only 7:30, but woods time was slipping away. John decided to quickly scout around and try working another gobbler as there was so much activity that morning. Once the woods settled down again, he gave another barred owl hoot. A gob-



bler answered some distance down the ridge. After walking a short distance on an old logging road, John reasoned he could locate the second bird and get something going. He never seemed to get quite close enough to him, however. That tom just wasn't cooperating.

Just as John decided he wasn't getting anywhere with that candidate, two jakes conveniently sounded off. They were well within walking distance, and on the same ridge. John looked at his watch and knew he was really running short on time. It was almost eight o'clock and the birds were at least another quarter-mile away. He figured they might be the same birds that he had heard several days before, when some jakes outsmarted every tactic he tried.

He thought to himself that this will probably be his last chance for a Pennsylvania gobbler, so he had better get moving. The turkeys would be within a reasonable distance if he saved time by staying on the logging road. He moved on them virtually on the double. They were close to the end of the valley and gobbled just enough to let John keep tabs on their approximate location. He first stopped within about 100 yards from where he suspected they were located and listened. As jakes, they were operating in duet fashion; one would gobble, then the other.

The turkeys apparently were moving out just ahead of John, along a parallel bench on the side of the slope. He couldn't move in too close, for fear of spooking them, so he was forced to try his knowledge at calling them down. He was able to close another 50 yards and set up just off the logging road where he could monitor developments. He called and the jakes gobbled right back. At least it was a good sign that John still had their interest. They gobbled intermittently, and John knew the

only answer was to get them a short distance downhill in front of him. The unseen turkeys walked around and gobbled up on the bench without any particular purpose or destination in mind.

John then made one final move further down the trail to get ahead of them. He knew if he could head them off either on their own level or just below it, he would get at least some control over the situation and turn the odds in his favor. He quickly slipped down the logging road, and found a clearing where the road split into two other trails, one of which ran right up towards the jakes. That location looked just about perfect to make something happen.

### Perfect

Just along side the trail intersection stood several large hemlocks with thick overhanging branches. This well-shaded spot was perfect for a photo-finish ending. He could set up in the shadows underneath the concealing hemlock boughs, and be invisible against the trunk. After getting himself situated, he sent the toms a rendition of his best calls with a blend of box and diaphragm notes.



**HE LOOKED** them over as they came down the trail single file, deciding they were probably triplets. Each sported an easily-seen beard, making legal identification simple.



**A MAGIC MORNING** it was for John and Don. It was only 9:30 in the morning and they had called in five gobblers, and tagged two within two hours of each other.

The turkeys, however, had traveled faster than John had anticipated. They weren't behind him, like he thought they should be, but almost above him. They had kept up with John as he made his last mad dash to get ahead of them. But then the turkeys camped themselves near where the one trail went up over the bench off the logging road. At that vantage point the jakes had an open option to do something, if only John could talk them into doing it.

John called again and the turkeys answered. As if by magic, they eased closer to the slope and started on down over the hill to see what waited on the logging road. John called several more times, and discovered he was dealing with three turkeys, not two like he previously envisioned. He could hear them approaching in the dry leaves as they marched down over the side and walked right down the trail. After they reached the halfway point, he could finally see them through the brush.

The morning sun brightened the slope and he could observe the iridescent majesty of three approaching birds. All three were decked out with heads and necks swelled in colors of red, white and blue; their feathers puffed up and tails fanned out—quite a beautiful sight. As jakes go, they pro-

vided just about as exciting a scene as a person could ever expect. They trooped up quite determinedly, while John quietly raised the Remington SP 1100 magnum to his shoulder. There was just enough of a clearing at the trail junction so the turkeys would walk right in front of him.

He looked them over as they came down the trail single file, deciding they were probably triplets—brothers out of the same clutch of eggs. Each sported an easily-seen beard protruding out of the breast, making legal identification simple. Twelve yards separated them from John, who was sitting motionless. As all three birds stepped out into the clearing, John lined up on the lead bird and ended his quest for the season.

Because of the abundance of acorns, beechnuts and other foods in the valley, the jakes grow fast. This one would tip the scales at a hefty 16½ pounds. When he checked his watch to complete the tag data, it was only 9:30. The hunt proved to be as magical a morning as you could ask for. John and Don called in five gobblers—and heard others. They tagged two fine gobblers within a mile, and within two hours of each other. For once, everything went right. It was a perfect hunt for both of them.

But more importantly, in a brief 45 minutes, Don's introduction to spring turkey hunting was unmatched by any other hunt in which he had ever participated. The experience would encourage a new interest in serious and dedicated hunting styles. The elusive inspiring turkey, within 20 miles of his Mechanicsburg farm, inspired Don with more enthusiasm and respect for our premier game bird than all his previous hunting escapades collectively.

And John didn't end up skunked, either!





**HUNTING IS** a strong tradition in the Bowers family. Here Glenn, Elmer and Toby display their trophies—the best bucks of three generations.

# Our Best Bucks of Three Generations

By Glenn L. Bowers

**“W**here did you find *that* buck?” That was the first question from the hangers-on who saw Dad’s deer when we stopped at the old general store in Wharton.

This trio of deer hunters—my dad, my son Toby and I—have taken a lot of deer. Now Dad is in his 90s and no longer hunts. He got his best buck in 1946, when he was 53. I was more fortunate, as my best buck came along in 1958, when I was 37. I had “lost” a bigger buck in 1954, but that’s another story. My son was lucky. He benefitted from the deer hunting savy we shared and scored his best in 1967, at age 16.

Strange things happen. Here’s Dad’s account of his long-ago hunt.

“Friday of the first week some of our hunters were leaving for home, disgusted because they’d seen no bucks. I never give up till my time in the moun-

tains or the season ends, and so it was that I hunted Friday, December 6, 1946, even though I had the grippe. Yes, I was sick, but I never get sick so this was highly unusual.

“The three drives we made before lunch played me out, and I was so miserable I ate little lunch. When we pushed into Little Nelson Run for another drive, I had to fall behind and soon could go no farther. I told the gang I’d see them when they came back down the hollow after the drive.

“After a brief rest I gathered enough energy to climb out of the bottom and sprawled in the leaves about 50 yards up the slope.

“A while later several rapid fire shots sounded high up on the ridge I was facing. I sat up and put my rifle across my knees. Soon I heard something coming through the leaves and then

that buck came into view. I didn't have to look twice to see his rack, and the sight made me talk to myself. I took a good bead on him and followed him into a more open area. I squeezed the trigger and down he went. Lucky? You're right. Had I been feeling up to par, I wouldn't have seen that buck and he'd have slipped through the drive untouched."

As the youngest hunter on that drive, I had to go to the top. They called me the Yo-Yo Kid in those days, because I was always running up and down those slopes. (Sure wish I could still do that.) When I reached the bottom after the drive, I was greeted by one of the lower watchers with, "Your old man just got one of Santa Claus's reindeer." Most of the other hunters had gathered at the trophy by the time I arrived. It was a festive occasion. That was the best buck ever taken by one of this group in their 25 years of hunting together. Needless to say, there was no more hunting that day.

### Snaked Down

We snaked the buck down the hollow, two of us pulling on a rope and two others guiding the antlers through the brush and rocks. As we drove to Wharton, a number of gawkers almost ditched their vehicles as they wheeled to see if that really was deer antlers in the bed of our pickup. We didn't stay very long at the store because we were causing a traffic jam — unusual for that little town then, but commonplace today in deer season.

Dad had always said, "Get in the right place at the right time and you'll see deer." That time he was there because he was feeling poorly — something unusual for him. He hunted till his late 80s, but never saw a better buck in rifle season in those 35 years.

My best buck was also taken on a drive. I was next to the top man on the watch. It was a long drive. When I took my stand, I was unaware of a well used deer trail along the contour of the mountain about 100 yards above me. The top watcher knew of the trail be-

cause he had hunted this area previously, and of course saw it when he crossed it while climbing the slope. He chose a watch slightly behind the line formed by the rest of us. That position later resulted in disadvantage to him and benefit to me.

As the drive was taking in quite a stretch of mountain, the drivers made a lot of noise. After much anticipation, I saw deer coming — a long line which I counted and examined as they passed a forked oak tree next to their trail. Seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty. The twenty-first in line was the buck. The top watcher shot and the buck stopped right at that forked oak. I saw that I could take him in the heart if I threaded that fork. At my shot, the buck came racing down the mountain at panic speed. I poured two more rounds at him before he disappeared in the heavy laurel in front of me. I felt sure I had connected with that first shot, but decided to wait until the drive finished to check things out.

As the drive was ending, the driver at my level on the slope hollered, "Who shot this monster?"

That was my cue, but the top watcher was now approaching as he thought he should have hit the deer. We looked over the buck and there was only one hole — right where I had held when he stood behind that forked oak.

There was lots of help to slide the buck down to the road. We made several more drives and a couple more bucks were tagged, but none comparable to number twenty-one in that line.

In 1966, my son Toby and I hunted a remote area of northcentral Pennsylvania. It was next to last day of buck season, and we arrived at our hunt area in early afternoon. We still hunted for several miles and saw some deer, but none with antlers. Then way down the slope I spotted a lone deer, and it had small antlers. I pointed it out to Toby and told him it was his choice — take it or hunt for a better buck. It was Arctic cold so his decision was quick. He took a leaner on a small tree and drilled that buck dead on the spot. So next morn





**GLENN, front right, dropped his biggest buck (so far) in 1958. It was the last in a string of 21 deer. As this vintage photo shows, Glenn had plenty of help to drag it out.**

he stayed in the warm camp and I climbed the ridge and slowly hunted my way to several overlooks where I scanned the opposite slopes.

I finally saw him at long range — and what a rack! I found a good rest and sat behind it in the snow. He was a long ways off, so I held just over his shoulder and squeezed one off. Nothing. I tried him again with a little more elevation. Nothing. Holding still higher, I touched off number three and still no movement! It was time to reevaluate!

I was so far from that buck he didn't have any idea he was my target. He hadn't moved, so I figured I hadn't got a bullet close to him. I focused in higher yet and let go with number four. He leaped downhill and disappeared from view. I galloped down the slope and hurried to the spot where he had stood while I did all my shooting. No hair, no blood, no nothing, except I had scared him when the bullet impacted on the steep slope back of him. I followed his tracks for a short way till

he tied in with a bunch of deer. The maze of tracks stymied my efforts to quickly relocate him and I was fast running out of time in the 1966 buck season. As I went back to camp, I was already planning my strategy to pursue that buck the next season.

We arrived about noon on Friday of the first week in 1967. We had seen no antlers on the way in this time. We split in the hollow; Toby went downstream and I went up. It was tough going in the bitter cold and almost knee deep snow, but I was deathly quiet.

I hunted right up to a nice little buck eating at one of the many apple trees in the valley. I sat in the snow and watched him head on as he chomped apples and dropped frozen chunks into the snow. My decision — to take him in the neck when he raised his head to chew.

Toby couldn't help feeling frustrated when we got together and I had a buck and he had seen none. I downplayed my success by noting it was just a little

Glenn Bowers is a former Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Game Commission. He retired in December—deer season—of 1982. As this story shows, his interest in wildlife was not, and is not, solely from a biologist's standpoint.

rack, and told him he was going to get the buster I had shot at on the last day of the '66 season.

I decided our approach would be up the nose above the slope where the big buck had been when I missed him. We climbed and watched, repeatedly. Then we stopped on a little bench. That quick, four deer were moving briskly across the point from the area the buck had been in the prior year, and they stopped right in front of us. And there he was—the big buck we were looking for!

"Take him quick," I whispered, "he's on to us."

At the report of Toby's rifle he leaped over the side and vanished down the steep slope toward the main valley.

Hurrying over, we found hair, bone, flesh, and a little blood. It looked like he had been hit a little too low and forward.

Now our concern was that main valley. It was frequently "patrolled" by hollow hunters. But it stayed quiet with no shots in our area.

The buck abandoned the other deer in his flight down the mountainside. He was doing a lot of slipping and sliding and dragging a front leg. We followed his trail through the main hollow, and not long after missed seeing him when he jumped after making a loop and bending down to watch his trail. Then he started up the steep slope. That was in our favor. A deer

newly on three legs, climbing steeply, would tire quickly.

Toby was a few yards off to my side as I tracked. "Keep watching ahead for the first thick spot," I told him. "That's where he'll stop to rest and watch." It seemed to take forever to reach a bench where there was a change in the trees. But then we were there and there he was! The next shot spun him around, and I urged my son to give him another one. The next shot put him down for good.

The "spinning" was caused by an '06 bullet through the base of an antler. It must have given him quite a headache and destroyed his equilibrium.

Now the real work began—to drag him over two miles through that deep snow, uphill to the road. We were glad to have him, but were also glad he had climbed part way up before he was bagged.

The first question from the first hunter we saw upon reaching the road was, "Where'd you get that buck?" I told him exactly where while he drove us almost two miles to my car. "Man," he said, "you guys really worked for that deer. I'd never go back in there. I'd get lost."

Looking back, I see we were fortunate we didn't push the wounded buck into another hunter. But then, the deep snow and intense cold had kept most hunters near the roads.

My son's disappointment of the day before had changed to elation, and I was happy the big buck was still there and that my strategy paid off.

In later years Dad saw some bigger York County farmland bucks during bow season, but he never connected with an arrow. Toby and I continue to hunt for bigger bucks, but the thrill of those earlier successes will always be with us.





# Maintain Your Traps

By Joe Kosack

**T**RAPS ARE the lifeblood of a fur-taker so it behooves him to take good care of and to modify them. Many do not, however, and I can't figure out why.

Each year, as I wander into dark hollows, meandering farm creeks and harvested cornfields, I encounter traps that deserve to be deposited on a workbench or trash heap. I know they don't have any more chance of catching and holding a critter than a trout beached in a desert has of surviving. Still, these sad-looking traps are always out there, and I bite my upper lip everytime I come across one.

I could be considered a fool for blushing when I see inferior traps afield. After all, if the competition's traps cannot hold critters that just means more fur for me. That's not the

way I see it, though; I give a hoot for the sport's sake.

Trappers annually buy traps by the hundreds of dozens only to allow a goodly portion of them to rust into scrap iron after only a couple of seasons. Many don't realize that traps will last a lifetime. All it takes is to dye them in logwood dye and store them in containers or indoors after the season closes.

Taking care of your traps is not the difficult task many make it out to be. As a matter of fact, once you get the hang of it, it's like doing a numbered dot-to-dot puzzle. But you have to try it, and many don't, they just keep setting those sorry-looking traps.

All right, so you want to dye your traps; what do you need? The first items to locate are a large canister or

drum to place the traps in for dying, an outdoor stove and fuel. Next, you will have to purchase logwood dye, either extract or chips. Look for the dye at about any trapping supply outlet. Use a one-pound package for every five gallons of water you pour into the container to cover the traps. The only other requirements are finding a place and the time to do the chore.

I dye my traps near a creek because of the handiness of water. So once the location is chosen, I build a cinder block fireplace, leaving the front open to feed the fire, and place a piece of sheet metal or screen over the three-sided enclosure. Next, I place a 50-gallon drum on the outdoor stove, fill it slightly more than halfway with water and start the fire. The water is heated until it boils, then the dye is added and stirred.

The traps are next to go into the container, but not before a twig is placed between the jaws of every leg-hold trap and they are bounded together in groups of 15 by long pieces of wire (use enough wire so the strand hangs over the lip of the container). I then ensure that there is about five inches of water covering the pile of traps placed inside and allow the fire to die.

I like to leave my traps in the dye overnight. The next morning, I pull the

bundles out and hang them to drip dry in a sunny area. Empty your container on the ground, not back in the water. Once the traps are dry, I store them in containers, which should be odor-free for fox traps.

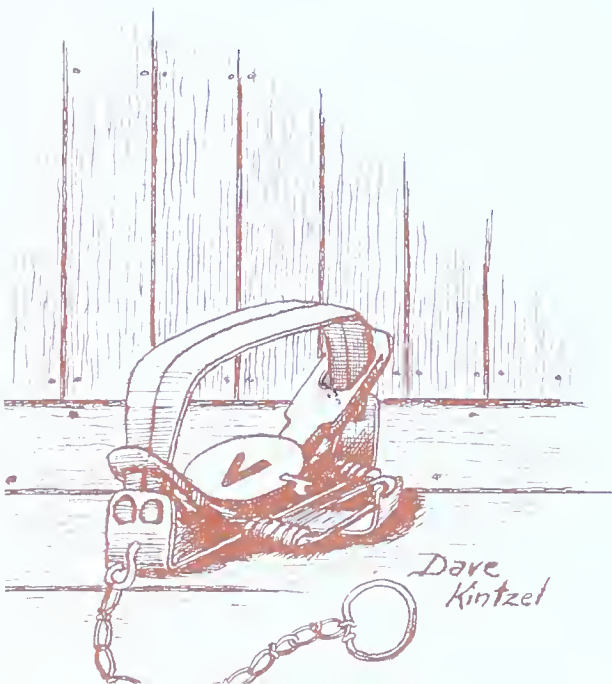
One final point on dying traps is that you cannot dye new, shiny traps, only those that have a coat of rust. So, if you plan to dye new traps for the upcoming season, scrub the traps with a brush and detergent to remove the protective oil manufacturers place on them and lay them outside where a coating of rust can form. When it does you're ready to dye.

Veteran trappers also make modifications to their traps to increase performance and to decrease injuries. One of the most common is adding box swivels to the trap chain.

Swivels are used to give a trapped animal more freedom to tumble and turn. If the critter should twist and tumble, the swivel ensures that the animal's leg can turn with the roll or movement of the rest of its body. Moreover, by reducing the potential for self-inflicted injury to the creature, the furbearer struggles less and is more apt to be patiently waiting for the furtaker in the morning.

On my dual-purpose traps, those used for foxes and raccoons, I like to use at least two swivels, sometimes three. Usually, I place one swivel on each end of a four-inch section of chain connected to the trap frame's crossmember opposite the dog (trigger). Most manufacturers sell traps (coilsprings) with a hole already drilled through this section of the frame.

By using this center-mount, instead of the side-mounted chain connection offered by most manufacturers, I further reduce self-inflicted injuries to captive animals because the furbearer's paw doesn't slide back and forth be-



**TRAPS** are the lifeblood of a furtaker so it behooves him to take good care of and to modify them. Many do not, however, and I can't figure out why.



tween the jaws during its escape attempts.

Swivels also help in reducing a muskrat trapper's losses to twist-offs in leg-hold traps. Simply insert a swivel in the center of the trap chain. That won't let you always get away with setting muskrat traps in two-inch-deep water. But should a trapped muskrat work its way into such an area, instead of diving into deeper water where it would drown, your swiveled trap will increase your odds of holding it.

Another modification made by seasoned trappers is to shorten the trap chain when using staked traps for foxes. Trappers who use this method believe that a short chain reduces the distance a trapped fox has to build up steam in a lunge, abating the chance of a pullout.

If you'd like to try that method, shorten some of your trap chains to three or four double chain links and connect an "S" link, or a swivel minus one fastener, to the end of the chain for staking. Leave the remainder of your fox traps as they are and trap with each type. At the end of the season—if it takes you that long to recognize the difference—compare the results. If you don't find the shorter chain to be more beneficial I'll be surprised.

A simple modification that a handful of muskrat trappers make to their body-gripping traps is to twist the double-wire triggers so they are not as prone to break. Because the thin-wire trigger is almost always the first part of a body-gripping trap to corrode and/or snap off, some trappers reduce the failure potential by twisting the two wires into one, stronger strand. The result: trap triggers that last far longer than the original.

There is, however, a drawback to using this twisted trigger if you trap where mink roam. Because the trigger size is reduced when the wires are twisted, young buck and female mink may be able to squeeze through your body-gripping trap without tripping the trigger. Because of this factor, those who trap in areas holding minks and

muskrats should give this modification some consideration before implementing it on their traplines.

Along with making modifications, the trapper must also occasionally perform tune-ups on his traps. For instance, if the trap pan (peddle) isn't setting level, the portion of the trap frame holding the dog must either be bent toward or away from the pan with a crescent wrench or pliers.

Coil spring pan wobble, or lack of pan tension, is another problem trappers should rectify before placing their steel afield. Most don't. Wobbly trap pans are bad news for trappers because they usually spark misfires, lead to undesirable catches and tip off twinkletoe foxes. For example, it's rare for me to accidentally catch a squirrel or rabbit because I set the pan tension tight enough to allow these lightweight creatures to step on the pan without firing the trap. In the same light, heavy rains never spring my traps because of the increased pan tension.

### **Wobbly Pan Problem**

To resolve the wobbly pan problem on coilsprings for raccoons and foxes, just grab a screwdriver and tighten the brass, pan tension bolt that holds the pan to the trap frame. To test your adjustment, set the trap and place a pair of six-inch pliers on the pan. If the trap pan creeps down and fires the trap, your adjustment is fine. Any other result will require further fine tuning.

If your trap passes the pliers test, it shouldn't fire when animals that weigh two pounds or less step on the pan, nor in heavy rain. In short, you'll be equipped with fine-working tools that reduce field frustrations and unnecessary work, two pitfalls of part-time trappers.

Without properly tuned and cared for traps, a furtaker invites plenty of misery to his trapline. So it behooves him to care for his tools if he plans to keep them for some time and to catch furbearers. Otherwise, his pursuits as a trapper and the trustworthiness of his traps will be short-lived.





# Right Place... ...Wrong Time

By Ben Moyer

**W**HAT IS IT with wildlife? Have the woodland critters been reading GAME NEWS to familiarize themselves with our seasons and bag limits? Or have they developed some elaborate way of communicating to one another the kind of hunting arm I'm carrying?

I ask these questions because I've noticed a pattern develop over the past several seasons in my encounters with game. It seems that I see deer, turkeys, grouse and other game under two sets of circumstances. Category 1 — At close range and unalarmed, but out of season, usually within a day or two of being fair game. Category 2 — At close range, unalarmed and in season, but when I'm hunting another species and, therefore, carrying the wrong firearm.

Take grouse, for example. Do you know of any wild creature easier to find than a grouse in deer season? I was fortunate enough to do a lot of deer hunting last year and I must have jumped half a hundred of the birds while stalking whitetails. Grouse flushed from cover that I'd tramped repeatedly without success during the small game season. They even flushed from places that looked like they hadn't held a grouse since Colonial days. Not only were there a lot of them, they flew as if they'd never heard of a shotgun. Each one seemed to take forever to get airborne before it winged leisurely on a beeline course through the woods. I don't think I saw one bird fly behind a protective grape vine tangle or curtain of snow-covered hemlock boughs. Many even gave a few warning clucks before taking flight.

On a snowy day in buck season I was following some deer tracks up a hollow when three grouse flushed from under

some fallen oak branches that still had some leaves. All three flew up the hollow, set their wings and landed in plain view only 50 yards away. I walked up and flushed each one separately (Category 1).

Once, on a chilly, wet Saturday in mid-October, I debated about whether to take my bow or my shotgun up on Bald Eagle Mountain in Centre County. I chose the bow, thinking the recent rains would allow me to sneak up on a deer. Well, I saw a couple of whitetails bounding away through the laurel, but I also flushed 12 grouse out of a single giant white pine — an experience I don't expect to ever duplicate. The birds left that tree singly and in pairs, at just about the right intervals that would have allowed me to keep shooting and reloading had I been hunting grouse (Category 2).

## This Time

The next Saturday found me on the same ridge, this time armed with an open-bored 16-gauge, a vestfull of 7½s and visions of surrounding that big pine. I jumped one grouse. He flushed wild at about 40 yards, but I couldn't resist snapping off one shot just to speed him along. But the day was not without excitement. It was still archery deer season and I saw six different bucks, including one broken-horned battler that laid back his ears, pawed the ground and snorted his hostility from only 15 yards away.

My grouse hunting has also led to some heart-breaking encounters with wild turkeys. I was hunting grouse on Broad Mountain in Dauphin County when I stepped out on a fire lane and saw six turkeys scratching along in the ditch at the side of the trail. They were

headed away from me in single file and had not seen or heard my approach from their rear. Crouching low in some sassafras saplings, I watched until they hopped up the bank on the right side of the trail and began moving uphill through a dense stand of belt-high huckleberry. I crept down the trail to the point where they had reentered the woods to try and catch a glimpse as they threaded their way toward the top of the mountain. When I saw them again, I was surprised at how close they were.

At that time, seeing wild turkeys up close was a rare treat for me and I wanted to see if I could narrow the distance between us even more. I broke into a headlong crashing run up the slope in hot pursuit of the flock. Six heads shot up and they began running, or rather they tried to run. The dense huckleberries kept them from stepping out as turkeys usually can and I over-

took them with surprising ease. Within seconds I found myself looking down at six turkeys close enough to shoo like their barnyard brethren. I don't know who among the seven of us was more bewildered. I stood there in opened-mouthed astonishment while the turkeys did a lot of frantic pacing and head bobbing, all the while emitting a steady stream of alarm putts. Finally, with a great crashing of wings and scattering of huckleberry twigs, the big birds flew one at a time. The shotgun came up voluntarily as each huge, glistening trophy struggled for altitude. It would have been easy. The bead found the head of each bird, the trigger finger settled into place, but it was two days before the fall turkey season. They all sailed unharmed down into the hollow.

As all Pennsylvania sportsmen know, we can't hunt on Sundays here. Some folks grumble about the lost recreational time, but I feel it's for the best. The law gives wildlife a break from the constant pursuit during the rest of the week and it gives landowners a respite from visiting hunters, too. The thing that is difficult for me to accept is that I've seen so much game on Sundays, especially on those Sundays during the time frame the critters are fair game.

For example, when my work took me to the Harrisburg area, I looked forward to having some great pheasant hunting in the surrounding agricultural valleys. But after five seasons of tramping through corn stubble, honeysuckle and stream bottom, flushing a total of three roosters, I concluded that the peak of the ringneck in Pennsylvania had indeed passed. About that time, I got up late one clear fall morning, looked out the window and gazed on two long-tailed cockbirds in my garden, picking through the dried beans I'd left on the vines for winter use. There they were, a limit of one of our



**I WAS hunting grouse on Broad Mountain in Dauphin County when I stepped out onto a fire lane and saw six turkeys scratching along in the ditch at the side of the trail.**



most desirable game species, 40 feet away on a beautiful Sunday morning.

These kinds of experiences are not confined to small game and archery seasons. On the last day of the 1984 buck season I saw 33 does on the steep hillsides of western Greene County. Most were well within rifle range, making me most confident about filling my tag on the following Monday, when antlerless deer would become legal game. I hunted the same area hard during the two-day antlerless season and sighted a grand total of two deer, glimpsed momentarily as they streaked through heavy timber.

To the misfortune of others, I have a way of spreading my strange malady to hunting companions. When I took a friend hunting during the antlerless season, he saw one deer. He still talks about its wide long-tined rack and the way the antlers stood out against the snow when the buck bedded down 60 yards away.

Earlier, in the buck season, I hunted a ridge where I'd tried unsuccessfully to call in a gobbler during both the spring and fall seasons. Deer were scarce that day but ten turkeys marched by my stand and flew up into a nearby grape thicket. There, in full view, they fed on the wild fruit for more than 20 minutes.

My tendency to encounter the right critter at the wrong time has carried over into my fishing as well. The two biggest native brook trout I have ever seen were decked out in their riotous fall spawning colors, cruising in a pool in a small headwaters stream on state forest land in northern Dauphin County. I was following the stream, hoping to put a grouse in my coat. Concealed by a fat hemlock trunk, I watched those gorgeous creatures patrol their pool for more than an hour. Naturally, I had neither flyrod or fishing license in my possession. Not even my truck parked back on the state for-

est road held the equipment necessary to capture those fish. I wanted to see if they would feed so I pried off a piece of half rotten log and extracted two fat white grubs. When I flicked the grubs into the pool the trout collided in their haste to gobble them up. I found some more grubs and a couple of ants. All were tossed on the surface with the same results— instant, unhesitating ingestion. It was fun feeding those trout, but I couldn't help thinking about the artificial grubs and ants in my now absent fly box.

When I returned to fish the stream the following May, I got "skunked" by the trout but my field notes say I flushed seven grouse. Even worse, I located a nest with eleven eggs.

### "Successful"

Contrary to the opinions held by some of my outdoor companions, I have had some hunting trips where everything went right and I returned home "successful." But many of the encounters I've had with wildlife when it could not be legally taken stand out. Perhaps that's because the sight of the animal or bird departing the scene under its own power, alive and still gracing some part of the autumn landscape is somehow more satisfying than a kill. Perhaps it's the satisfaction of following the game laws when alone and far from any witness other than your own conscience. Whatever the reason, I wouldn't trade away the experiences I've related. Any opportunity to observe wild creatures is far too valuable to taint by regretting that the trigger could not be pulled.

So I intend to continue hunting, even though I am haunted by frustrating experiences. But I'm not entirely sure if I'll be hunting for a piece of game, possessed and in the bag, or for some special moment, the fraction of a second in which the eye sees, the mind recognizes and the heart records a memory.



**WOODCHUCK** hunters are especially prone to tick attacks. Although not all ticks carry disease, sportsmen should safeguard themselves from getting bitten. A few simple precautions and a thorough check after returning home are all that's necessary.

## Warning: Terrorists Want You!

**By David R. Thompson**

**T**HE KNOWLEDGE that hunters who stalk game are potential victims of ambush is a turnabout that leaves many outdoorsmen feeling edgy. It should, too, because the "terrorists" in ambush can kill.

The terrorists are ticks that employ disease warfare against unsuspecting people who enter their territory. Lying in ambush in high grass, weed fields, and often at woodland edges, ticks wait patiently until a human, dog or wild animal passes close enough to touch. Silently and without warning the terrorists attach themselves to their victims, setting the stage for a potentially deadly blood bath.

If you think that describing ticks as terrorists is farfetched, think again.

Every year in Pennsylvania and other tick-plagued states, people contract serious diseases after being bitten by ticks. Some victims die. In Pennsylvania the cause of death usually is Rocky Mountain spotted fever, the probable source being the common American dog tick.

Many hunters, myself included, have been targeted by ticks. Last year, on the first day of spring gobbler season, I climbed a ridge and heard a gobbler. I quickly sat on the duff beside a log and tried to call in the turkey—it outfoxed me. While sitting on the ground, lecturing myself for letting the gobbler see me, I felt something on my neck. It was a tick. Hours later, at home, I was still picking ticks that were





**TICKS** normally target wild animals, above left. The American dog tick, above, is the species most likely to attack man. Use tweezers, however, to handle ticks, even blood-gorged ones, left.



orienting themselves on their victim (me). The next stage in their attack plan was to embed their mouth parts in my skin and begin sucking my blood.

When a tick ingests its victim's blood, it secretes an enzyme that may transmit diseases. Not all ticks carry disease, but because there is no way to know which ones do, all ticks are suspect and must be treated as critters having the potential to harm.

To stay out of harm's way, outdoorsmen should be aware that ticks may be present. The Pennsylvania Department of Health, which records certain tick diseases, reported that ticks are most prevalent in southeastern counties. I live in southcentral Pennsylvania and have been ambushed there by dozens of ticks in recent years. My

hunting dogs also are attacked by them. Therefore, whenever I hunt, hike or camp in tick habitat, I stay alert. Terrorists, remember, strike where they are least expected.

Discouraging a tick attack is not easy; however, applying an insect repellent helps. The labels on some repellent containers claim that the ingredients deter ticks as well as other insect pests. (Ticks, by the way, are not insects. They are closely related to spiders and mites, which aren't insects, either. One obvious difference is adult insects have six legs whereas adult ticks have eight.)

Besides using a tick repellent, concerned outdoorsmen can wear clothes that are specially treated to ward off insects. Ticks initially often crawl onto a person's clothes, not directly onto the skin, so treated clothing does provide additional protection. Once on clothing, ticks search until locating an exposed place on the victim's body. A repellent that has been applied to the skin may discourage ticks from attaching themselves for a feeding.

It takes ticks two hours or longer to get their bearings on a victim and begin feeding. Ticks frequently select a person's head, underarms, waist and groin areas as meal sites. Wearing a hat helps protect the head and a long-sleeve shirt protects the arms. Wearing

long pants and tucking them into boots or tying them closed at the bottom with string are good precautions. In a tick-infested area, however, it is difficult to prevent becoming ambushed, so expect an attack and check your body repeatedly for them. Children, by the way, are more prone to tick attacks than adults because kids tend to play in places inhabited by ticks.

Man is not a natural host or prey for ticks. Natural hosts are wildlife, particularly small mammals such as mice, rabbits and woodchucks. People become victims when they walk along or across animal trails where ticks wait in ambush. Game trails aren't the only places where ticks are encountered, but in the wilds those trails are commonly staked out by ticks seeking victims.

Two species of ticks common in Pennsylvania are the American dog tick and brown dog tick. Of the two, the American dog tick is more apt to attack man. The other species prefers to prey on dogs and may live in pet owners' homes year around, hiding in cracks and crevices where they are undetected. The American dog tick lives

outdoors and is inactive during winter. When spring arrives and people become more active outside is when the American dog tick also becomes active. It remains so through summer and autumn, when most cases of tick diseases occur among humans.

Another common species, the deer tick, transmits Lyme disease, a serious condition that causes arthritis and in advanced stages can lead to heart failure, brain damage or joint deformity. The disease was identified in 1975 in Lyme, Connecticut. Since then an increasing number of Lyme cases has been reported in the country, including Pennsylvania. There were 28 confirmed cases here in 1986 and even more likely cases, said Dr. Bobby Jones, a veterinarian with the Pennsylvania Department of Health. He noted that because Lyme disease is a growing health problem it was added in 1987 to the department's list of reportable diseases, a list that includes Rocky Mountain spotted fever.

The life histories of ticks vary according to species. What they have in common are four growth stages — eggs, larva, nymph and adult. Some ticks, including those threatening Pennsylvanians, use three hosts during their life cycles.

Mating normally takes place on the host, probably before the female has fed. To feed a tick penetrates the host's skin with mouth parts that the victim never feels. Next, the tick secretes a cementing agent that bonds the mouth parts to the victim, making the tick "stick like a tick." The feeding tick also secretes a digestive enzyme to break down the blood. If the tick is diseased, the enzyme can transmit the disease to man and, occasionally, to dogs or other domestic animals. It is uncommon in Pennsylvania, however, for dogs to become infected with a tick disease. Even



**DON'T** forget to thoroughly examine your canine companions. Fortunately, though, it's uncommon for ticks in Pennsylvania to transmit diseases to dogs.



so, pets should be frequently brushed and inspected so ticks are removed.

Ticks have sensory organs that detect carbon dioxide. Jim Stimmel of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture said ticks are strongly attracted to carbon dioxide released by their hosts' skin. When the gas is detected, ticks know that a victim is close.

"People are too nonchalant about ticks and don't know that they can be infected just by touching them," Stimmel warned. Secretion on a tick's body can transmit disease to a person who handles it with bare hands, particularly if the hands are cut or scratched.

A pair of tweezers is the best instrument for removing a tick embedded in a person or animal. If tweezers aren't available, grasp the tick with tissue paper or wear disposable gloves. By holding and pulling gently, the tick can be removed without breaking its mouth parts, which, otherwise, would remain embedded in the skin and possibly cause infection. Also, carefully removing a tick bloated with blood will

prevent puncturing or squashing it and spreading any disease that may be in its body fluid.

Once a tick is removed, the spot where it was embedded should be washed with soap and then covered with an antiseptic. If the bite becomes infected or if the victim becomes ill, a doctor should be notified immediately. Besides Lyme disease and Rocky Mountain spotted fever, ticks can transmit tularemia and tick paralysis, although the latter two diseases are uncommon in humans.

The fact that countless ticks are waiting in ambush to attack hunters and other outdoorsmen may seem like science fiction. Unfortunately, it's true that ticks are present and they require blood to live and reproduce. An informed outdoorsman recognizes the danger and takes steps to protect himself, his family and pets. Because no one knows which ticks are diseased, all must be treated as if they were loaded guns. Every safety-conscious hunter knows what that means.

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*G. Galvanish*

THE OTHER two were still in front, going from left to right. I watched their bright red heads bob around as they looked for the hen they had heard.

**I wanted a spring gobbler . . .**

## The Old-Fashioned Way

**By William R. Glessner**

**I** COULDN'T WAIT. This particular spring was an exceptionally long time in coming. I was anxious, not only because I had been finding birds during my scouting trips, but also because this was the year I had decided to use a muzzleloader. My muzzleloader is one I made from a kit. It's a Brown Bess flintlock with a 42-inch, 75-caliber (11-gauge) smooth bore barrel. Guns of this type were used to some extent during the Revolutionary War. After much experimentation I settled on a load consisting of 1½ ounces of No. 5 shot, which I prepackage in a paper cartridge with a ½-inch felt wad for the base. That arrangement makes

loading in the field faster and easier. A fairly heavy charge of FFg black powder, topped with a thick card wad, round out my load.

I was all set. My gun was shooting well and hours of practice with a box call I made myself and another caller my neighbor made for me had me confident and raring to go.

The opening day of the season found me where I had seen a big gobbler during my scouting. There was no sign of him that morning, though. The second day, Monday, I went to the same area but was headed to a different location. As I was walking along the edge of a field I heard a gobble. I quickly



stepped into the woods, sat down behind a big tree and started to call. He answered immediately. In fact, he responded every time I called. Everything seemed perfect, except for one thing—there were four hens between me and the boss. The old bird kept answering my calls, but he stayed with the four females as they strolled across the field. I watched them until they were out of sight, wondering if he was the same gobbler I had seen earlier.

I returned the next day. The weather was not nearly the same, though. By the time I got in position the wind was blowing hard and it was cold. It even rained for a short time. I probably should have stayed in bed, but I was determined to give it my all.

Shortly after daylight I made my first call, but nothing happened. I made several more, with a caller a friend had made me, over the next 40 minutes. Then, unexpectedly, I heard a tiny twig snap behind me. I froze. I knew it was a turkey and I knew it was close. As it turned out, there were three, all gobblers, and they walked past me on my left, along the edge of the field, only eight steps away. I didn't dare turn my head or even blink for fear they might see the movement. When they were about 20 yards in front of me, two of them went into the woods. The other went farther ahead, turned into the woods, and then disappeared. The other two were still in front, going from left to right. I watched their bright red heads bob around as they looked for the hen they had heard. They came in without gobbling, I suppose, because they knew a boss gobbler was in the area, probably the one I had seen the previous day.

The second gobbler had the longer beard, so that's the one I decided to pursue. I quietly cocked my flintlock. I then waited for both of them to get

their heads behind a tree at the same time, so I could bring my flintlock into position, but that was not to be.

When the second gobbler went behind a tree I started to move the muzzleloader into position, but the first gobbler saw me. He stopped and stretched his neck out to get a better look at me. A few seconds later, he moved. When he got behind a tree I maneuvered my gun into a better position. But then the second turkey saw me and he, too, stretched his neck out for a better look. I froze again. By this time I was wondering if I would ever get a shot.

A moment later the gobbler moved again, and in just a few steps he was in an opening, offering a perfect shot. I snapped the flintlock the rest of the way to my shoulder and took aim. The first turkey saw the movement and ran, alerting the second turkey, but it was too late. I fired and dropped the gobbler in his tracks.

### Jeremiah Johnson

Needless to say, shooting a gobbler with a flintlock I had made made me feel like giving out a "Jeremiah Johnson" yell. The thrill was certainly much greater than the one I got after shooting a turkey with my autoloading shotgun. I felt I had gone back 200 years in time. It's a real challenge with only one shot—one chance—to bag a bird. You either have him or you don't; it's up to you and your flintlock.

The turkey was a young gobbler. It weighed a little over 14 pounds and had a 4½-inch beard. It wasn't the big gobbler I had seen earlier, but I couldn't have been happier. Take it from me; the handmade caller, the handmade flintlock, the 1½ ounces of number 5 shot, and 100 grains of double F black powder made an exceptionally good recipe for roasted turkey.

# THIEF!

**F**OR THE FIRST time in my life I was really crushed. I had so planned on Old Man Chapman coming for supper that night that any thought that he might not be there, let alone refuse to come, was unthinkable. Yet as I stood there in his kitchen, a barefoot kid in bibbed overalls, Old Man Chapman's words hammered at my brain until I could feel the tears scalding my eyes.

Even Old Man Chapman felt bad. I could tell by the look on his face—the pale blue eyes and droopy mustache—and the low sadness in his voice. Yet in those days with that generation I knew there was no bending his will, no compromise of convictions.

"It's stealing," he said. "Just as though you walked in a bank like Johnny Dillinger an' took a bag of money at gunpoint."

I blinked and he leveled a gnarled finger at me.

"When you go out an' shoot rabbits an' pheasants this time of the year when the season's closed, you're stealin' from me an' the rest of us that go by the rules. You ain't no different than them fellers who shoot an extra deer durin' deer season—an' I despise them!"

"But it's just a couple of rabbits," I blurted. "Just special for *our* supper."

The old man shook his head. "I'm sorry, boy. I just can't. I just can't come over an' eat supper with you knowin' that you shot it out of season. If I did I'd be just as guilty as you. I can't."

And then he straightened and looked at me and I took off on a dead run.

Out of sight of his house, I might have sat down and bawled. I don't remember. But I do know that on the

way home I gave a lot of thought to my actions of the previous two or three weeks. And looking back on it, it wasn't all that great.

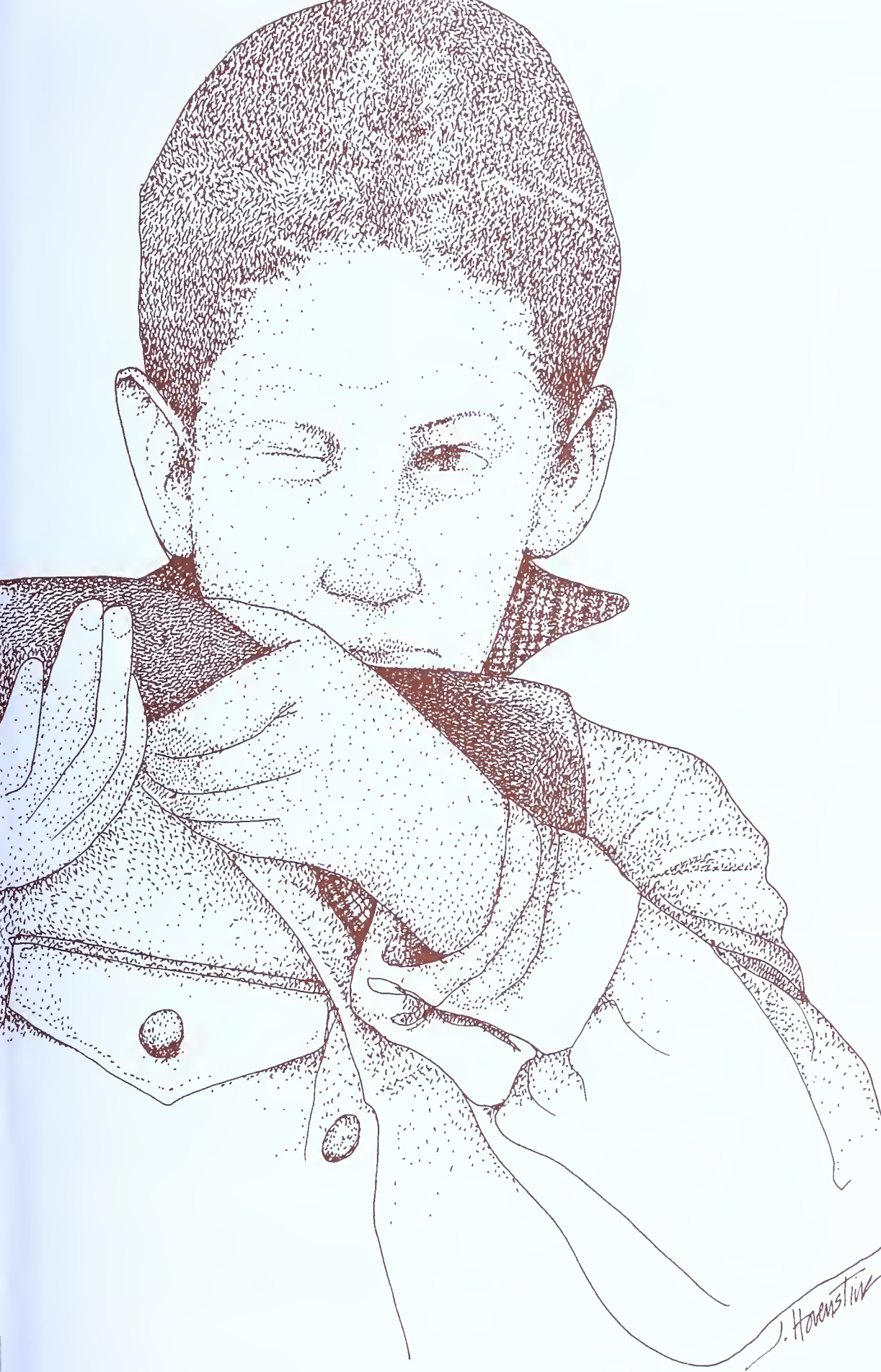
Back in those days I had a little Remington No. 4 Rolling Block chambered for the 32 rimfire long. It was a boy's rifle weighing about 5 pounds and deadly accurate within those ranges at which boys shoot. A squirrel's head at fifteen yards was an easy target, and sitting rabbits never stood a chance. To add to the situation, game was abundant, and from Decoration Day in the spring until Labor Day in the fall I was virtually free to roam hundreds of acres of brush lots, fields, swamps and woods. It was a made-to-order situation, and during that time-dimmed era, I took advantage of it.

It was early June. Baby crows were still in the nest, and during the warm nights the peepers in the swamp set up a chorus you could hear a mile away. The whole world was teeming with wildlife and as I walked along the hedgerow that separated our property from the neighbor's, my mind was filled with daydreams of adventure from the African jungles to the tundra of Alaska. And then, mid-stride, something in the hedge caught my eye.

At first it reminded me of a shiny black marble—it does to this day—and then I could make out the form of a rabbit huddled against the stump with that solitary big eye glaring out at me. A dozen thoughts ran through my mind, first of which was that rabbit season was closed. But who would know? And who would miss one rabbit out of the hundreds that were around? Besides, Ma didn't have much money and we could use the meat.

**By Paul A. Matthews**





In a lot less time than it takes to tell about it, the little rifle settled against my shoulder and I pressed the trigger.

There was a thrill to that act, an exhilaration that swept upward from the pit of my stomach with the knowledge that *I* had done something others were afraid to do. It was far better than snitching from the cookie jar where Ma was the only authority I had to contend with. Here, the authority was an unknown factor, a mystical game warden that I'd heard about but never seen, an iron fist from a distant town. And even as I gutted the rabbit and wrung its head, I couldn't help but look over my shoulder to see if anyone was watching. Then, heart pounding with excitement, I bolted home to show Ma our prize.

"You shouldn't have done that," she said. "It's not hunting season."

I grinned, and that wave of exhilaration swept through me again.



Two days later, I got a pheasant with the little rifle, a perfect head shot as she scrouched down low in the timothy and goldenrod, frozen immobile by the instincts of thousands of years. Again, as she fluttered and flapped about the ground while I sought to grab her, the swift surge of excitement washed over me and I gave the nest of eggs but a passing glance.

And so it went for two or three weeks during that month of June. With each passing day and its precious moment of success, I began to gain confidence and thought of myself as a hunter with abilities a cut above all the others. I visualized great exploits and I began to think ahead toward deer season. Just the thought of something *that* big filled me with excitement.

Once or twice during that period, just after I'd shot a rabbit, I had the feeling that somebody was watching. The fine hairs on the back of my neck spiked outward and I wheeled around with my eyes bulged to the white. Nobody. Nothing. Yet the feeling was there. Somebody had seen me. And the excitement that had earlier lay in the pit of my stomach shrunk a bit and made room for an uneasiness of doubt. I began to be more careful and to plan in my mind the story I'd tell just in case I did meet someone.

### No Interference

But day after day passed with no interference, and I began to enjoy life as never before. It seemed there was lots more game than during the regular season, and my boy-sharp eyes had little problem spotting it. It was mostly rabbits I got for they were plentiful and easy to collect. More than that, they tasted delicious fried in an iron spider with a bit of crushed garlic.

Then came the disaster. It started on one of those days when everything goes

THE LITTLE Remington No. 4 Rolling Block, chambered for the 32 rimfire, was a boy's rifle, weighing about five pounds and deadly accurate at the ranges at which boys shoot.



A SQUIRREL'S head at 15 yards was an easy target, and sitting rabbits never stood a chance. To add to the situation, game was abundant. It was a made to order situation I took full advantage of.

perfect from the minute you get up in the morning. The sun was shining and the air had that fresh late-spring smell of cleanness to it. The grass was wet and cool against my bare feet as I worked along the hedgerows and the brushy banks of Mallory Run. Rabbits seemed to be all over the place as though planning a family reunion, and by the time I returned to the house at noon, I had three of them to hold up to Ma.

"But what in the world are we going to do with *three* of them?" she asked. "We can't eat that much rabbit at one time."

"We can have Old Man Chapman over for supper," I said. "He hasn't been here for a long time."

Ma said okay, but I could tell she wasn't happy about it. I took off on a dead run for the Chapman place and twenty minutes later the old man told me I was a thief. A common ordinary garden variety thief.

That night was the only time in my life that I ever sat down to a supper of fried rabbit and didn't eat any. There wasn't enough conversation across the table between Ma and me to stuff in a 22 short, and when supper was finished she took the untouched platter of rabbit off the table and I never saw it again. Nor did I pick up the little 32 Rolling Block for several days.

Thief! Even the sound of the word evokes an image of slime—a man who has something less than a backbone. Yet that's what Old Man Chapman had called me. A thief.

How I wanted to go back to his house and talk to him, to explain that I really wasn't a thief, that I hadn't meant any harm and that I'd never again take that which wasn't mine. How I wished that those past three weeks hadn't happened—that I could somehow erase them from the calendar—that I could put that hen pheas-



ant back on her nest. How I hoped that all the little baby rabbits I'd orphaned somehow made it to maturity. But most of all, I wanted to be friends again with Old Man Chapman.

I never knew whether Ma went to see him or whether he came to see Ma, but one night a few weeks later Old Man Chapman showed up for supper and it was just like nothing had ever happened. We talked across the table about hunting and shooting, and he brought me a whole stack of old hunting magazines. And never once from that day on did he mention my hunting out of season. And never once from that day to this have I taken, or been tempted to take, a rabbit or bird or anything else out of season. And whenever I remember that interlude from so many years ago, I have to think that Old Man Chapman said it best with one word.

*Thief!*





**MARLEY HEMPHILL**, Greensburg, went to Warren County to bag this 18-pound gobbler.



**J. REED VAIRA** and **DAVE MARKS**, Washington, pose with their Greene County trophies. Reed's weighed 20 pounds, Dave's almost 19.

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SPH**



**DAVE COMFORT**, above, Oreland, is proud of his first turkey. Taken in Bucks County, the bird weighed 21 pounds and sported an 11-inch beard. **DEAN HEIKES**, Red Lion, dropped this Cumberland County trophy on the opening day last year.

**GEORGE KAUFFMAN** and son **RALPH**, Coalport, dropped pound gobblers in Clearfield County.



**JIM RUPP**, Ephrata, went to Elk County for this, his first gobbler, an 18-pounder.



**PHIL  
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**MIKE ARRIGAN**, Meadville, stayed in Crawford County to bag this 15-pound gobbler.



**BILL FERRIER**, Shelocta, took this 18-pound bird from Jefferson County.

**ASHLEY SEITZINGER**, right, Shartlesville, stayed near home to bag this 20-pound trophy. **TOM CAPOZZA**, below, Monongahela, shot his 19-pounder in Jefferson County.



**and son RANDY**, Darlington, took in the Tionesta area on the opening season.



**MARK STRANIX**, Huntingdon Valley, shot this, his first spring gobbler, in Tioga County.







# FIELD NOTES



## Picked the Right Truck

**CRAWFORD COUNTY**—Last fall I went home to Bedford County for a day of turkey hunting. While driving to our hunting spot a screech owl flew into the side of my truck. I picked the dazed bird up from the middle of the road and placed him on my truck seat, thinking it might come around if left in a safe warm spot. Upon returning from a fruitless hunt we found the owl perched on my steering wheel, watching the traffic go by. I returned the owl to where it had been hit, released it, and watched the little guy fly away, apparently in good health. Even now, months later, I still think of him when I look down at my steering wheel. — WCO Robert W. Criswell.



## Big Help

**WASHINGTON COUNTY**—While talking with hunters throughout the small game seasons, I noticed that those who complained the most about a lack of game were the ones who weren't hunting with dogs. Believe me, the effort it takes to raise and train a dog throughout the year really pays off when hunting seasons roll around. — WCO R. Matthew Hough, Washington.

## Keeping His Outside Job

**WESTMORELAND COUNTY**—My mailman told me he once believed being a wildlife conservation officer would be a great job. But after seeing—and lugging—the mountains of mail I receive, he has since concluded there's too much paperwork involved. — WCO D. L. Neideigh, Greensburg.

## Poor Humor

**BRADFORD COUNTY**—During the past hunting season, some practical joker placed "No Trespassing" signs over our State Game Lands signs. He even signed my name to the bogus posters. Whoever did this actually made my job easier because there were fewer hunters to check. I just wish I knew his name and address so I can send him a slip of paper. It won't be a thank you note, though. — WCO William A. Bower, Troy.

## Vacate the Premises

**BRADFORD COUNTY**—When Mrs. Dale Pitcher and her two daughters heard glass break and then noise in the upstairs of their Warren Center home, one of the girls peeked through a bedroom door and screamed when she saw something staring back. All three ran from the house, certain a raccoon was on the loose inside. The man of the house was summoned, along with Deputy Fred Wheaton and, armed with a ball bat and a snare pole, the hunt began. Soon feathers were found and they were followed to a curtain where, tangled in the curtain string, underneath a broken window, was a ruffed grouse. — WCO A. Dean Rockwell, Sayre.



## Livin' Right

**CLEARFIELD COUNTY**—During hunting season I have the privilege of meeting and dealing with hundreds of people. While some are less than thrilled to meet me, most are friendly sportsmen out enjoying the outdoors. It seems every year one of these individuals leaves a lasting impression, and such was the case in '87. Last year I checked the hunting license of Merritt Bundy, a local resident who was hunting antlerless deer. Merritt is as fit as a fiddle and looks 20 years younger than the 88 years he has graced this earth. I'd like to think his many days afield have had something to do with his good health and longevity. Best wishes for many more days afield, Mr. Bundy. — WCO Colleen M. Shannon, Luthersburg.

## Back and Forth

**CAMBRIA COUNTY**—The message on my code-a-phone was left by an individual wanting a permit to possess a roadkilled deer. Returning the call I got an answering machine, so I left a message requesting the individual's full name, address, and the township where the deer was killed. He returned the call and left on my answering machine all the information except for the spelling of his last name. I, therefore, called him back and left another message on his answering machine. Later, he left the correct spelling on, true to form, my answering machine. Something tells me he was just as busy as I was. — WCO L. A. Olsavsky, Colver.

## Nice Bonus

**ADAMS COUNTY**—Last fall many turkey hunters who spent the opening day in the western end of this county reported seeing a special treat—large numbers of broad-winged hawks that happened to be migrating through the area that day. — WCO Larry Haynes, Gettysburg.

## It's a Thought

**JUNIATA COUNTY**—Many sportsmen and landowners have commented to me about last year's new restrictions on spotlighting. Most feel spotlighting should be prohibited not only during the regular antlered and antlerless seasons, as it is now, but also in the archery and muzzleloader seasons. — WCO Dan Clark, Honey Grove.



## Good Idea

**HUNTINGDON COUNTY**—On the second evening of buck season I was patrolling SGL 121 when I noticed a light bouncing along a road closed to motorized vehicles. I found a group of hunters hauling out a 3-point on a wheelbarrow with a flashlight taped to it. In the 24 years I've been a wildlife officer I've seen hunters use many different means to bring out deer, but that was the first for a wheelbarrow. — WCO Don Adams, Waterfall.

## Now You Know

**MCKEAN COUNTY**—Many hunters don't realize that not just centerfire rifles and handguns are legal to use during the regular antlered and antlerless deer seasons. Also permissible, throughout most of the state, are bows and arrows, flintlocks and percussion cap rifles and revolvers—with scopes, peep sights, or whatever sight a person chooses—and shotguns with slugs. — WCO John P. Dzemyan, Smethport.

## Unexpected

At 7:15 on the opening morning of buck season I checked a local Game Lands parking lot. Everything was as it should be. About 20 cars were in the lot, no hunters about, and a big buck feeding in a field not 100 yards away. I watched the deer for five minutes before it wandered off. — LMO Barry S. Zaffuto, Ebensburg.



## Hot Line

**DAUPHIN COUNTY**—When I compiled my 1987 reports I discovered I received and made 2823 phone calls during the year. — WCO Skip Littwin, Hummelstown.

## Can't Please Everybody

**VENANGO COUNTY**—Our antlerless deer program was the subject on a local call-in radio show several months ago. Many callers felt it was wrong for the agency to have extended the season last year, but an equal number criticized the agency for not permitting more deer to be taken. Everybody, it seemed, had a different solution to the problem. Judging from the suggested solutions, though, I'm not sure there was much agreement on just what the problem was. I think such mixed reactions indicate we are heading in the right direction. — WCO Leonard C. Hribar, Seneca.

## Significant Sightings

For months last fall an osprey frequented an area along Raystown Lake. Although a few people knew of its presence, most residents and tourists who observed it didn't seem to know what it was. I just wonder what percentage of them realized they were seeing a bird that not very long ago was on the verge of extinction, but today is staging a strong comeback because of successful reintroduction projects being conducted throughout the East. — LMO Don Garner, Marklesburg.

## Exciting Moments

**CLARION COUNTY**—I was checking hunters on the last—extended—day of the antlerless season when some activity in a vehicle about 300 yards up the road grabbed my attention. Using binoculars I saw a rifle barrel emerge from a vehicle window and heard a report. The barrel quickly disappeared, then the car horn blew, and then a shorter barrel appeared out the window and another shot was fired. Thinking I had a roadhunting case all locked up, I went up to the vehicle and found a handicapped person entitled to hunt from his vehicle. He told me his rifle jammed after his first shot and, while reaching across the seat for his 44 Magnum revolver, he bumped the car horn. The horn stopped the deer, though, allowing the man to make a clean kill with his handgun. — WCO Gordon J. Couillard, Clarion.

## There Is None

According to my calculations, based on the number of shots fired by hunters using our goose blinds at Pymatuning, approximately 1½ tons of steel shot was deposited in the area last year. That figure doesn't include shots fired from the duck blinds or public areas. Based on what we know about lead poisoning, I can't think of a better argument for requiring waterfowlers to use steel shot. — LMO Keith Harbaugh, Meadville.



## Dedicated

**CENTRE COUNTY**—My paper-boy, Patrick Johnsonbaugh, has had the paper at my front door promptly at 6:45 every morning except one—the first day of buck season. That morning he delivered the paper sometime before 5 o'clock, so he'd have plenty of time to pursue a whitetail. — WCO Joe Wiker, State College.

## Practice Now

**SCHUYLKILL COUNTY**—As the weather warms, thoughts of deer we missed last year may be far from our minds. But they shouldn't be. Now's the time to look ahead and make a commitment to do better in the upcoming season. Why not unlimber the bow or dust off the muzzleloader and take to the pasture fields for practice. With woodchucks aplenty, memorable challenges can be had, and you'll be helping a landowner, too. — John C. Shutkufski, Pottsville.



## How It Goes

**WAYNE COUNTY**—Last year the bears pulled one over on the members of the Rockport Hunting Club near Sterling. Nobody from the camp got a bear. A week later, however, after one of the members got a nice buck and went to get help dragging it out, several bears found it and left little more than the antlers and an unusual story. — WCO Donald R. Schauer, Honesdale.



## The Box, Too?

**PHILADELPHIA COUNTY**—Like all wildlife conservation officers, I take littering seriously. One morning, at 2 o'clock, I watched an individual throw pieces of pizza at a deer standing alongside a road. When he finished, he threw down the empty box and drove off. I stopped him and charged him with littering. He requested a hearing in municipal court and was issued a citation. At the hearing he pleaded not guilty. His argument was that he felt deer liked pizza. After the laughter died down, the judge found the man guilty and ordered him to pay a fine. — WCO Richard J. Shire, Philadelphia.

## Welcome Guest

Every year I've gone to work at the bear check station near Warren a local retired fellow, Lee, who probably wouldn't want me to reveal his last name, has dropped in to visit and discuss everything that happened over the past year. On the opening day of last year's bear season, however, I was saddened to learn that Lee had suffered a stroke, causing him to lose his speech and the use of his right side. He was sorely missed. Our spirits rose on the second day, though, when one of his friends brought Lee to the station to see us. Even though we were sorry to see him in his condition, we were all happy he dropped in. Upon parting, Lee informed us he'd be back in 1988. — LMO R. H. Muir, Kittanning.

## Get Out and About

**ELK COUNTY**—It's again that time of year when birds are nesting, young rabbits are hopping about, and fawns are found hiding in ferns. Spring is undoubtedly one of the most pleasurable times to be afield, and everybody should take time to enjoy nature's renewing process. But please, don't take any wild animals home with you. — WCO Dick Bodenhorn, Ridgway.

## Don't Interfere

**BEAVER COUNTY**—This time of year brings too many calls from people wanting to know, for example, what to do with a baby raccoon or what to feed a fawn. Please, remind your neighbors and friends that taking animals from the wild is wrong. The practice is against the law because animals can transmit diseases, wild animals belong to the state, and cooping up wild animals just isn't right. — WCO Steven M. Spangler, Beaver.



## Popular Show

**LEBANON COUNTY**—During a preseason pheasant release, a fellow stopped and asked if he could take some home movies. On opening day I was left wondering how many people he had shown them to. Thirty-seven cars were parked at the very spot I had released the birds. — WCO G. W. Smith, Lebanon.

## Good Friends

**CLINTON COUNTY**—I'd like to thank Lou Einshutz and Bill Konopka for their help in prosecuting an individual who made two attempts to kill a second deer. In addition to providing the information I needed to make an arrest, each took a day off from work and traveled up here from Baltimore, Maryland, to testify at the hearing. Then, as if that weren't enough, they made a second trip to testify when the defendant appealed his conviction to the court of common pleas. Pennsylvania sportsmen, you have some friends in Maryland. — WCO John Wasserman, Renovo.

## Poor Assumptions

**DELAWARE COUNTY**—Hunters have been getting a bad rap around here lately. Responding to a report of a hunter in a Safety Zone, Deputies Robert Howarth and George Hinkle found a gentleman guilty only of wearing a fluorescent orange hat while walking his dog. The same night a security guard was assaulted at an industrial complex. The call to the police indicated hunters were involved, based solely on the fact the assailant was wearing camouflage clothing. — WCO R. G. Feaster, Aston.

## Sportsmanship

**PERRY COUNTY**—Dave Wolf, Liverpool, was hunting in Lycoming County on opening day when he downed a nice buck. After field-dressing and tagging, Dave began to drag it out. He proceeded, however, to get lost. Fortunately, two hunters came to Dave's rescue. The men, from Chester County, loaded Dave's deer onto a carrier, took the deer to their truck, and then drove Dave and his deer to his truck. The distances weren't that great, but the time involved was a tremendous sacrifice for the helping sportsmen. — WCO LeRoy Everett, Marysville.





**STATISTICS** indicate hunting is one of the safest activities, yet there is concern for the accident rate among turkey hunters. Because of the techniques involved, turkey hunters must exhibit extreme care and caution.

## Hunting Accidents Still At Low Rate

**H**UNTING ACCIDENTS continue to be recorded at near-record lows, according to the final compilation of 1987 hunting accident reports. Out of millions of man-days spent afield, only

128 accidents were recorded last year, believed to be perhaps the lowest accident rate among nearly all sporting and social activities.

Hunter and Trapper Education Chief Jim Filkosky notes the 1987 accident total is consistent with figures compiled in recent years. "There were 122 accidents in 1984, (another) 128 in 1985, and 125 in 1986," he reports. "The 1987 total ties with two prior years as the fifth lowest number on record.

"Only 1918, with 67 accidents; 1917, with 101; and the aforementioned 122 in 1984 and 125 one year later were lower than the 1987 total," according to Filkosky. "However, the number of fatalities has fluctuated, numbering 12 in 1984 and 1987, while rising to 17 in 1985 but dropping to only 4—the all-time



# Pennsylvania Game Commission

## Hunting Accident Report

### 1987

| Casualty                          |     |    |    | Weather Conditions                |   |     |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|----|----|-----------------------------------|---|-----|-----|
|                                   |     |    |    |                                   | F | NF  | T   |
| Fatal                             |     |    |    | Clear                             | 4 | 80  | 84  |
| Self-Inflicted                    | 1   |    |    | Overcast                          | 6 | 18  | 24  |
| Inflicted by others               | 11  |    |    | Fog                               | 0 | 2   | 2   |
| Nonfatal                          |     |    |    | Rain                              | 0 | 12  | 12  |
| Self-Inflicted                    | 23  |    |    | Snow                              | 1 | 4   | 5   |
| Inflicted by others               | 93  |    |    | Not Reported                      | 1 | 0   | 1   |
| Total                             | 128 |    |    |                                   |   |     |     |
| Sporting Arm Used                 |     |    |    | Light Conditions                  |   |     |     |
|                                   |     |    |    |                                   | F | NF  | T   |
| Shotgun                           | 4   | 72 | 76 | Dawn                              | 1 | 6   | 7   |
| Rifle                             | 7   | 34 | 41 | Daylight                          | 9 | 104 | 113 |
| Revolver                          | 1   | 5  | 6  | Dusk                              | 2 | 4   | 6   |
| Muzzleloader                      | 0   | 0  | 0  | Dark                              | 0 | 2   | 2   |
| Compound Bow                      | 0   | 5  | 5  |                                   |   |     |     |
| Animal Hunted                     |     |    |    | Cause of Accident                 |   |     |     |
|                                   |     |    |    |                                   | F | NF  | T   |
| Deer                              |     |    |    | Sporting arm dangerous            |   |     |     |
| Regular Season                    | 8   | 25 | 33 | position                          | 0 | 11  | 11  |
| Muzzleloader                      | 0   | 0  | 0  | Accidental discharge              | 1 | 15  | 16  |
| Archery                           | 0   | 5  | 5  | Ricochet                          | 0 | 12  | 12  |
| Turkey                            |     |    |    | Stray shot                        | 0 | 3   | 3   |
| Spring                            | 0   | 8  | 8  | Victim in line of fire            | 4 | 35  | 39  |
| Fall                              | 1   | 24 | 25 | Hunter slipped and/or fell        | 2 | 5   | 7   |
| Squirrel                          | 2   | 13 | 15 | Shot in mistake for game          | 4 | 34  | 38  |
| Grouse                            | 0   | 7  | 7  | Hunter dropped sporting           |   |     |     |
| Woodcock                          | 0   | 1  | 1  | arm                               | 0 | 1   | 1   |
| Pheasant                          | 0   | 6  | 6  | Unknown                           | 1 | 0   | 1   |
| Quail                             | 0   | 1  | 1  |                                   |   |     |     |
| Rabbit                            | 1   | 17 | 18 |                                   |   |     |     |
| Woodchuck                         | 0   | 4  | 4  |                                   |   |     |     |
| Waterfowl                         | 0   | 1  | 1  |                                   |   |     |     |
| Fox                               | 0   | 1  | 1  |                                   |   |     |     |
| Opossum                           | 0   | 1  | 1  |                                   |   |     |     |
| Crow                              | 0   | 1  | 1  |                                   |   |     |     |
| Other                             | 0   | 1  | 1  |                                   |   |     |     |
| Ages of Persons Inflicting Injury |     |    |    | Place of Accident                 |   |     |     |
|                                   |     |    |    |                                   | F | NF  | T   |
| 12 to 15 years of age             | 0   | 13 | 13 | Field                             | 3 | 28  | 31  |
| 16 to 20 years of age             | 2   | 21 | 23 | Woodland                          | 7 | 82  | 89  |
| 21 to 50 years of age             | 9   | 56 | 65 | Road or Highway                   | 2 | 3   | 5   |
| Over 50 years of age              | 1   | 18 | 19 | Vehicle                           | 0 | 2   | 2   |
| Not Reported                      | 0   | 8  | 8  | Open Water                        | 0 | 1   | 1   |
|                                   |     |    |    | Summary of 1987 Hunting Accidents |   |     |     |
|                                   |     |    |    | FATAL                             |   |     | 12  |
|                                   |     |    |    | NONFATAL                          |   |     | 116 |
|                                   |     |    |    | TOTAL                             |   |     | 128 |

NOTE: The average hunting experience per offender is 16 years. Based on 1,145,179 hunting licenses sold in 1987, the accident rate per 100,000 licensed hunters is: fatal—1.04, nonfatal—10.13, total—11.18. The total of 128 accidents ties with two prior years as the fifth lowest number on record.



record low — in 1986. There were 12 last year.

"To me, the most worrisome aspect of the annual report is the number of turkey hunting accidents," Filkosky comments. "Although there are over a million deer hunters in the state, there were nearly as many accidents last year involving turkey hunters—33—as there were involving deer hunters—38. Our research shows there are about 300,000 fall turkey hunters and around 250,000 spring turkey hunters.

"Especially bothersome are the 8 spring turkey hunting mishaps. During the spring gobbler season it is lawful to use both mouth and hand-operated calls to bring in turkeys to hunters. It is unlawful to hunt turkeys by driving. The idea is for the hunter to call in the turkey, not go to the turkey. Yet nearly all spring gobbler accidents involve a hunter sneaking up on and shooting another hunter who is calling. The only legal target is a bearded bird—and hunters' beards don't resemble turkey beards. There is absolutely no excuse for a hunter shooting another person in mistake for game—especially during the spring gobbler season," Filkosky maintains.

"Years ago a Game Commission law

enforcement director said, 'All hunting accidents can be attributed to one of two causes, greed and carelessness.' I'm not sure that's true in every instance, but there aren't many that don't fit one or both of those categories," Filkosky believes.

Although there may be a tendency to think most accidents are caused by young, inexperienced hunters, such is not the case. "The average hunting experience per offender in 1987 was 16 years," Filkosky points out.

The largest category of accident causes was "victim in line of fire." There were 35 of those, just one more than the number "shot in mistake for game."

Commenting on hunting accident rates, Filkosky points out a study done by Travelers Insurance Companies lists these sporting and social activities in order of risk: football, winter sports, baseball, bathing and swimming, basketball, skating, "in the country" or "at the beach," bicycling, at parks, picnics, outings, golf, horseback riding, boating and canoeing, gymnasium activities, fishing, at theaters, churches and concerts, and (finally) hunting.

"The annual accident report just confirms how safe the sport of hunting really is," Filkosky concludes.

## New Big Game Records Book

Pennsylvania's deer and bear harvests have attracted nationwide attention for many years, so more than two decades ago the Game Commission began measuring whitetail racks and bear skulls and collecting this data into permanent records. From 1965 through 1986, nine official statewide measuring programs were held. Thousands of deer and hundreds of bears were measured, using the internationally recognized Boone and Crockett system so that hunters could see how Pennsylvania trophies compared with those taken anywhere in North America. Results of these individual scoring sessions were reported in GAME NEWS. Now we have produced a 208-page hard cover book, *Pennsylvania Big Game Records, 1965-1986*, integrating the scores of all nine programs into one master list. Also included are the stories of dozens of the successful hunts, along with hundreds of trophy photos and related material. *Pennsylvania Big Game Records* can be ordered now from the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797. Price is \$10 delivered.



## 1988 Pennsylvania Duck Stamp

**A**PAIR of wood ducks by Cedar Falls, Iowa artist John Heidersbach has been selected as the 1988 Pennsylvania Waterfowl Management Stamp/Print design. The nationally renowned 44-year-old artist's rendition of a pair of wood ducks flying by a stand of paper birches garnered top honors among the 63 artists who entered the contest to select this year's design.

1988 marks the second time wood ducks have been featured on Pennsylvania's duck stamps. The first was in 1983, when Ned Smith's "Sycamore Woodies" was selected for the distinction of being the state's inaugural duck stamp design. Since then Canada geese, by James Killen; mallards, by Ned Smith; blue-winged teal, by Robert Knutson; and pintails, by Rob Leslie have been featured.

Revenues from the sale of duck stamps and prints are used specifically for waterfowl. Wetland acquisitions, habitat development, building and erection of nest boxes, and the produc-

tion of information and education efforts to make sportsmen and others more aware of the plight facing waterfowl today are just some of the activities made possible through this voluntary program.

Pennsylvania's 1988 Waterfowl Management Stamp is available at the Harrisburg headquarters and region offices, the Pymatuning and Middle Creek Wildlife Management Areas, and selected hunting license issuing agents. Price is \$5.50 each, \$22 for a plate block of four, and \$55 for a full sheet of ten, delivered. 1986 and 1987 stamps are still available at those same prices. For additional savings, five or more 10-stamp-sheets, in any combination of years, is \$40 per sheet. The 1986 stamps will remain available until December 31, 1988, at which time all remaining supplies will be destroyed.

Fine art prints of 1988 design, and those from previous years, are available from art dealers and galleries nationwide.



# Game Commission Publications & Items

| Quantity | Books   | Price    |
|----------|---|----------|
| _____    | BIRDS OF PENNSYLVANIA, by James & Lillian Wakeley .....   | \$ 10.00 |
| _____    | THE WINGLESS CROW, by Charles Fergus .....                | \$ 10.00 |
| _____    | MAMMALS OF PENNSYLVANIA, by J. Kenneth Doult, et al ..... | \$ 4.00  |
| _____    | GONE FOR THE DAY, by Ned Smith .....                      | \$ 4.00  |
| _____    | PENNSYLVANIA WILD GAME COOKBOOK .....                     | \$ 4.00  |
| _____    | DUCKS AT A DISTANCE .....                                 | \$ 1.00  |
| _____    | WOODLANDS AND WILDLIFE .....                              | \$ 2.00  |
| _____    | PENNSYLVANIA TRAPPING MANUAL, by Paul Failor .....        | \$ 3.00  |

## Working Together for Wildlife Collectibles

|       |   |          |
|-------|---|----------|
| _____ | 1988 ART PRINT "Snowy Egret" .....          | \$125.00 |
| _____ | 1987 ART PRINT "Autumn Challenge" .....     | \$125.00 |
| _____ | 1986 ART PRINT "Country Lane Kestrel" ..... | \$125.00 |
| _____ | 1988 SNOWY EGRET PATCH .....                | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1987 ELK PATCH .....                        | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1987 ELK DECAL .....                        | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1986 KESTREL PATCH .....                    | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1986 KESTREL DECAL .....                    | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1985 BOBCAT PATCH .....                     | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1985 BOBCAT DECAL .....                     | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1984 BLUEBIRD PATCH .....                   | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1984 BLUEBIRD DECAL .....                   | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1983 OTTER DECAL .....                      | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1982 OSPREY DECAL .....                     | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1981 FLYING SQUIRREL PATCH .....            | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1981 FLYING SQUIRREL DECAL .....            | \$ 1.00  |

## Wildlife Management Areas

|       |                                    |         |
|-------|------------------------------------|---------|
| _____ | PYMATUNING WATERFOWL PATCH .....   | \$ 2.00 |
| _____ | PYMATUNING WATERFOWL DECAL .....   | \$ 1.00 |
| _____ | MIDDLE CREEK WATERFOWL PATCH ..... | \$ 2.00 |
| _____ | MIDDLE CREEK WATERFOWL DECAL ..... | \$ 1.00 |

## Pennsylvania Bird and Mammal Charts

|       |   |         |
|-------|---|---------|
| _____ | Set 1 (4 charts) 20" x 30" .....                                    | \$ 4.00 |
| _____ | Set 2 (4 charts) 20" x 30" .....                                    | \$ 4.00 |
| _____ | Set 3 (8 charts) 11" x 14" .....                                    | \$ 4.00 |
| _____ | GAME NEWS Cover Prints (4 by Ned Smith) 11" x 14" .....             | \$ 4.00 |
| _____ | State Symbols Chart 20" x 30" (Deer, Grouse, Hemlock, Laurel) ..... | \$ 2.00 |

## SPORT Items

|       |                                       |         |
|-------|---------------------------------------|---------|
| _____ | Bronze SPORT Tie-Tac/Lapel Pin .....  | \$ 3.50 |
| _____ | SPORT Patch .....                     | \$ 1.00 |
| _____ | SPORT Hat (Adult or Youth Size) ..... | \$ 4.00 |

## GAME NEWS

|       |  |         |
|-------|--|---------|
| _____ | GAME NEWS Binder (Holds 12 Issues) ..... | \$ 5.00 |
|-------|--|---------|

## Waterfowl Management Stamps (Voluntary)

|       |  |         |
|-------|--|---------|
| _____ | 1988 Waterfowl Management Duck Stamp ..... | \$ 5.50 |
| _____ | 1987 Waterfowl Management Duck Stamp ..... | \$ 5.50 |
| _____ | 1986 Waterfowl Management Duck Stamp ..... | \$ 5.50 |

Mail orders along with remittance to Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797. Checks should be made payable to Pennsylvania Game Commission.

DO NOT SEND CASH

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# The Hunter's Look

By Linda L. Steiner

**W**HAT WOMAN wouldn't agree that one of the best parts of spring is replacing winter's heavy wools with the light and delicate clothes that go with warmer weather. Away with the dark shades and the garrish brights that tried to enliven winter's dullness. It's refreshing to don a new blouse or skirt and see ourselves in spring pastels: blue as pale as a robin's egg, pink as fine as the wild azalea, yellow like sunshine on a trout lily, green as vibrant as a tender willow shoot.

## Other End of the Year

In the ladies' circle, spring is traditionally a time of new togs, a season for a whole new look. It's also a time for the fellas to chuckle among themselves about all the fuss and frippery of us gals. But their turn is coming, it's just at the other end of the year. Guys are just as vain about being in fashion as women. They merely do it in a different season and for a different reason. When autumn comes, they're anxious to acquire the look of the hunter.

I'm amazed every fall at how quickly a clean shaven, suited, tied and cuff linked, nine-to-five man of business can become a bearded backwoodsman. It smacks of alchemy or transformation, or at least a little of the Jekyll/Hyde, Clark Kent/Superman switch, and it happens just as fast. Men see

nothing unusual in the change we gals notice. They merely reply that they're "getting ready for hunting season."

The phenomenon happens not just in the rural areas and small towns of the state, but also in the big cities. With the falling of leaves, legions of male hunters sprout a new crop of facial hair. A secretary goes into the office for dictation and, for once, really looks at the boss. She does a double-take. When did she start working for a bearded man? A wife gets a quick kiss as her hubby leaves for work. Ouch! When did that stubble start? And isn't he getting a little shaggy about the ears? Maybe it's time for a trip to the barber. "But honey, I can't shave it off now. I need the beard for hunting season. For the cold and for camouflage, you know."

Practicality isn't all there is to it, though that may be all that's admitted. It has to do with fashion and fantasy, with looking like a seasoned man of the woods, no matter what you really are. Every fall the look of the hunter is seen not just in the forests and fields, but in town, too, at the grocery store, the post office, the filling station. Gone are the sport jackets, the golf shirts and slacks, the polished loafers and sneakers. In vogue now are flannel plaid and soft chamois, wool and canvas and camouflaged cotton. The hunters' fashion takes its palette from the autumn leaves and rich earth tones, plus that incredibly vibrant orange that, like a designer's logo on a pocket, puts the final stamp on the nimrod.

As we gals know, it's not just what you wear, but how you wear it. Unlike the ladies' spring styles, which are at their best when crisp and new, the hunters' clothes must have an aura of experience, whether they got that way honestly or not. Though at some point, every gunner's or archer's outfit was

## Another View...

by Linda Steiner



**GUYS ARE** just as vain about being in fashion as women. They merely do it in a different season and for a different reason. When autumn comes, they're anxious to acquire the look of the hunter.

brand new, it is never seen that way. To wear it well, the colors must have a faded appearance, as if they've endured their share of rain and sun and wind. The fabric must be worn soft as if from contact with miles of branches and briars. The collars and cuffs should be frayed from beard and brush. A nice touch of authenticity is a lost button replaced with one that doesn't match or a tear that's been repaired with thread that clashes. A little ground-in mud, bird-dog slobber and gun grease are basic frills. The surest sign of "gaucherie" in the world of hunting fashion is an ensemble that still bears the creases of the box or hanger.

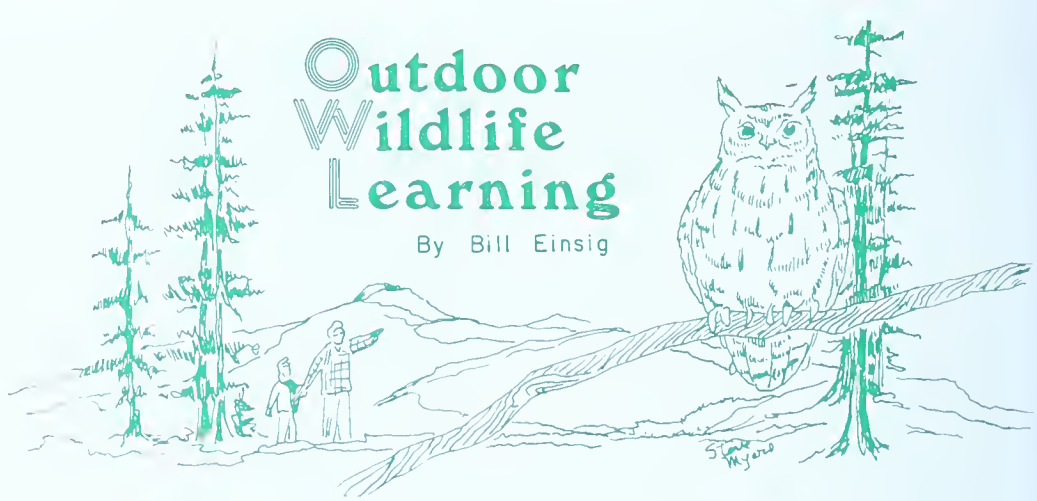
I've seen so few hunters whose outfits look new, that I've sometimes wondered if there isn't a service available (a closely kept secret) that custom-seasons brand new hunting clothes. After all, how many working men have the time to properly break in a set themselves, yet none wants to appear afield on Saturday looking like a weekend hunter. I can just imagine a service with teams of employees running a course through the mud and brambles, giving new hunting clothes that veteran woodsman look, at no bother to the owner.

However, that crow-footed squint, as if a hunter's eyes have scanned countless skies for geese, and that rugged ruddy complexion that belies a lifetime in the wilds, have to be gotten legitimately. The outdoorsy look of fall appears so fast on men, fellas who just a few days before were balancing ledgers or repairing appliances, that I wonder if they haven't been practicing at night before the bathroom mirror with a cold wind blowing in through the window. Surely it must be a little sur-



reptitious, sandpapering and digging with their nails in the wife's flower pots that have given their hands that instantly weathered character.

While the gals might complete their spring wardrobe by including a purse and shoes, the guys think bigger in achieving the total hunter look. Just about the time the ducks start south, an inordinately large number of pickup trucks and 4x4s appear on the roads. Where have these been hiding all year? Or did they migrate in, too? I don't recall seeing them in summer traffic, only those sleek sedans with rolled up glass that bespeaks air conditioning, and the compacts with windows wide open and radios blaring. I don't remember these heavy tracked vehicles, with the deer and coon dog decals on the side, and the SPORT plate on the front. But then, I don't remember seeing these bearded men in the rough plaids who are driving them, either. However, they do look vaguely familiar.



## ***The Nightjars***

I'VE BEEN seeing bluebirds, redwings and robins, all welcome harbingers of spring, over the past few weeks. But there's another harbinger that is frequently overlooked. It's the whippoorwill, an unusual and unfamiliar bird more frequently heard than seen.

Whippoorwills live throughout the hardwoods of eastern North America. They spend the daylight hours crouched, eyes closed and perfectly camouflaged, on the forest floor. At dusk, they become active, swooping about over nearby fields, netting huge numbers of insects with their enormous mouths. Rounded tails and wings covered with soft contour feathers give the whippoorwill almost noiseless flight.

Night-flying moths make up the bulk of the whippoorwill diet. One researcher found 36 moths in the stomach of one specimen, not bad for a bird just nine inches long. It's the bristle-fringed gape that extends beyond the large, light-gathering eyes, that turns this unusual bird into a very nimble flying insect net.

Most of us recognize this secretive neighbor by its territorial song. The three note "whip-poor-will" is often repeated in rapid, monotonous succession. Counts of more than 200 nonstop repetitions demonstrate how this bird can grate on one's nerves.

Any bird that sings as much certainly gives rise to legends and folklore. New Englanders believed a whippoorwill singing close to a home was a sign of death to a member of the household. Several tribes of Sioux Indians also associated the whippoorwill song with death. When

these native Americans heard the bird's first notes, they answered. If the bird stopped singing at once, the answerer was doomed. If the whippoorwill continued its repetitions, the brave was assured a long life.

Other legends used the whippoorwill to foretell marriages. A young maiden, for instance, listened closely to the first song of spring. If it was a single call, she would soon be married, but if it was repetitious, she was destined to become a spinster.

Some mountain folks also believed the number of repetitions marked the years before marriage would take place. Of course they also believed an old man could cure his aches and pains by somersaulting to the rhythm of the whippoorwill's song. At 50 repetitions per minute, and stretching for several minutes, that translates into a lot of somersaults.

The common nighthawk is a close relative of the whippoorwill. Unlike other members of this family, however, the nighthawk is not strictly nocturnal. It might be seen swooping insects during daylight hours or competing with bats in the evening twilight.

As an insect trap, it's amazing; 91 May beetles were found in one nighthawk stomach, 500 mosquitoes in another, 60 grasshoppers in another and 2175 flying ants in still another. One bird had so many fireflies packed tightly into its stomach that the combined glow was obvious when the bird opened its mouth.

Nighthawks have long pointed wings with a definite "elbow" similar to falcons. Their tails are forked and their feet and bills are weak. Two white wing patches are



most obvious field marks of the herky-jerky nighthawk.

Unlike their whippoorwill cousins night-hawks are not singers. They manage only a nasal "peent." They have dramatic courtship dives, though, ending with a roaring zoom as air rushes against hard wing feathers. Another common name for the nighthawk, bullbat, comes from its roaring dive and its erratic flight.

Neither nighthawks nor whippoorwills build nests. Nighthawks lay two protectively mottled eggs on gravel surfaces. Roofs of many buildings provide suitable nest sites for this common urban resident. Whippoorwills lay their white eggs directly on the leafy woods floor. Conspicuous when left alone, the eggs are incubated for 16 or so days by both parents.

Nighthawks and whippoorwills belong to the family Caprimulgidae and are commonly known as goatsuckers or nightjars. A very old legend accuses these birds of taking milk from farm animals. Even though their erratic evening flights were targeted by the insects around these animals, not their milk, the name stuck.

"Nightjar" is an equally curious name. We commonly think of a jar as a glass container for applesauce or tomatoes. Or, it could be a sudden bump, as when a youngster jars a china cabinet. Another definition, though, refers to a jar as a harsh, discordant sound or a grating noise. Just think of the cicadas of last summer and their rasping calls. Europeans call the cicada a "jar fly."

Goatsuckers are an unusual group. They simply don't conform to the neat patterns we impose on wild critters. For instance, most young birds that are helpless at birth (altricial) are born naked. Not so with goatsuckers. Their young are weak and helpless but are covered with the thick down typical of precocial birds. Goatsuckers don't build nests and can't even sit normally on a twig or branch. Instead of sitting crosswise, like the perching birds, goatsuckers face lengthwise, grasping twigs between their tiny feet.

Like many other insect eaters, most goatsuckers migrate to better feeding territories in winter. Whippoorwills and night-

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## GAME NEWS

For a Friend . . .

hawks, for example, migrate to southern United States, Mexico and Central America before flying insects become scarce here.

Perhaps the most unusual characteristic of goatsuckers is their apparent ability to hibernate—yes, hibernate.

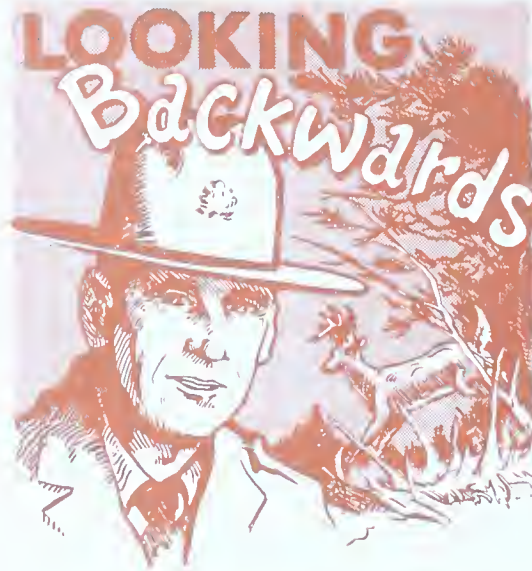
One European nightjar species can enter a state of cold rigor to pass most of the day and then revive for a feeding flight at dawn. Such cold rigor slows heart and breathing rates and lowers the body temperature. Each reduces the demand for food energy.

In the southwest United States, the white-throated (Nuttall's) poorwill takes the place of our whippoorwill. In 1946, a poorwill was found in cold rigor in a rocky crevice. It was taken inside where it warmed and fully revived. It was then tagged and released only to be found in a similar cold rigor during the three following winters.

Researchers are not certain whether or not the period of cold rigor lasts continuously throughout the winter months. They believe the poorwill is capable of both short periods of cold rigor, like its European cousin, and of a deeper, longer lasting sleep similar to mammalian hibernation. Interestingly, the Indian name for the poorwill is "holhke," meaning sleeper.

Experiments with the common night-hawk show that a state of cold rigor can be induced under laboratory conditions. Revival is more difficult and some birds have died during attempts to return their body systems to a functioning state.

Some evening this summer, drive down a wooded country lane, park your car, and then listen for whippoorwills. Even though you may never see one, appreciate them for the nonconformists they are.



## By Bill Bower

Wildlife Conservation Officer  
Bradford County

**I** DON'T WANT you to think that a wildlife officer's job is all law enforcement; nothing could be further from the truth. As a matter of fact, the job has become so diversified that the Game Commission is trying to find ways to free us so we have more time for law enforcement work. During the summer, a lot of our time is spent with wildlife complaints. It seems every type of wildlife from rabbits to bears and everything in between gets into trouble. In my area, beaver seem to have a special knack for getting in the wrong place. Beaver complaints usually occur in late March and April and sometimes into May. By the middle of summer, beaver complaints slack off until about the end of September and they run right through October. We've all heard that old expression, "Busy as a beaver." Actually, in March and April beavers are on the move, trying to set up new colonies. During the summer, a beaver's life is fairly uncomplicated. He loafs around, not doing much cutting, except for the food he immediately needs. But by the end of September, when the nights turn cool, and certainly by October, when we in the north country have our first frost, the beaver springs into action. It starts cutting and building dams, digging canals and putting in the winter's food supply. That's when they get into trouble.

Let me tell you about the month of May

in 1982. My first complaint concerned an injured hawk. The hawk, a redtail, had a broken wing. Now, all wildlife officers handle live hawks. I had done it many times in the past, but this one turned out to be a real problem. It was quite mobile and could half-fly and hop. It took me on a merry chase across an open field. When I finally did catch it, I attempted to put it in a small box. I got a little careless, though, and it caught me on the finger with one of its talons. There were some anxious moments, but I finally got it in the box.

The next week, officer Rockwell asked if I could help him with a beaver complaint. Regardless of what you've seen on Marlin Perkins' "Wild Kingdom," catching wild animals is not always easy. At the particular dam where we were working Dean felt there were some young beavers inside the lodge. His plan was to let the water out of the dam, to give us access to the entrance holes. Deputies, each with a bass net, were positioned at all the entrances, to capture the beavers when they came out. We would then put them in a burlap bag and take them to a new home.

Tearing a beaver dam out is hard work on a hot summer day. Tearing a lodge apart is twice as hard. Not only do beaver dams have a unique odor, but they also have a full complement of mosquitoes. By the time I arrived, Dean had the water level down and was starting on the lodge. Everything was going as planned; we had put several big holes in the lodge and had found the living chamber. All of a sudden the dam went out. "Here he comes!" someone yelled. The man with the net missed. The beaver got into the remaining water, which was about 40 yards long, seven feet wide, and four feet deep. We tried netting the beaver when it came up for air, but a beaver can stay under water up to 15 minutes if it has to and they're fast, too.

Dean decided he and I would get in the water, which was too muddy to see anything, and walk side by side in an attempt to push the beaver to one end where it could be netted. The beaver had other ideas. We worked him up to one end—we couldn't see him, but we could sure feel him swimming past our legs. One time he swam between my legs (and regardless of what Dean says, it was not a blood-curdling scream. I prefer to think of it as more of a gasp). We finally did net the beaver with one of Dean's bass fishing nets. The beaver wanted no part of the net. He



thrashed around, bending the pole. When I finally grabbed his tail Dean quickly grabbed a burlap bag and, after much gnashing of teeth, we finally bagged our beaver. Kay, Dean's wife, was supposed to take pictures, but in the excitement, she forgot. She wanted us to put the beaver back in the water and do it again, but there was no way I was going to let that beaver swim between my legs again.

It turned out the beaver did not have any young, but Dean had beaver problems at the same spot later on.

The next complaint of May '82 involved a bear in a bee colony. I checked the damage and decided to try and trap the bear in one of our culvert traps. No problem. I've done it before. I set the trap using cream-filled donuts as bait. A few days later I received a call that something was in the trap. Going through Canton, I picked up a friend, Jack Huffman, to help. I was going to tranquilize the bear, tag, weigh and take other data from it, and then give it a new home. I've done that before, too. As I was hooking the culvert trap to the vehicle, the lady came out. She was disappointed to find I wasn't going to process the bear there. She had her camera and wanted some pictures. Well, I rearranged my plans and sent Jack for the equipment in the vehicle. The bear wasn't big; we estimated its weight at about 150 pounds. The drugs were mixed and the bear was hit with the jab pole. Although it normally takes only a few minutes for the drug to take effect, this bear was still going strong after 15 minutes. We waited some more and then decided to give it another dose. This time, after nearly ten minutes, the bear went down. We waited some more, until it looked to me as though the bear was completely out. Jack wasn't so sure, but I was. I opened the door and poked the bear with the jab stick. No response. I grabbed his ear and rolled his head around. No response. Okay Jack, let's pull him out, I decided.

The lady was readying her camera and Jack was preparing some ear tags. I was starting to measure the bear when all of a sudden, it tried to get up. I attempted to hold him down, knowing full well who would win if it turned into a wrestling match. I sent Jack for more drugs while the lady closed in with her camera. The bear rallied around and decided to stand up. As you may guess, his first steps were towards the lady, who quickly decided she really didn't want any pictures. She did an



**THE SNOWY EGRET** is the seventh species in the Game Commission's Working Together for Wildlife program. The program is intended to generate support for nongame animals. This year's snowy egret patch is priced at \$3, delivered. Patches of the bluebird, bobcat, kestrel and elk are still available; those of the osprey and river otter are sold out. Decals (\$1 each) of the first six species are still available, but none of the egret is being made. Order from the Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.

about-face and covered the distance to the house in short order. Next, the bear decided to leave. He tried to run, but fell and got back up and started again. He was reeling like a drunken sailor (remember, I was in the Navy). He staggered and swayed out of the yard, across the road and down over a bank. I threw Jack the snare we use to handle live animals and told him to keep the bear in sight while I mixed up another injection. I figured the bear would lie down, allowing us to sneak up on him, give him another shot and get back to work. Nothing could have been further from the truth. He led us on a merry two-mile chase that ended at a steep ravine, one too steep for us to follow. We ended up watching helplessly as the bear ran up the other side and out of sight.

When we got back to the trap site we found the lady was not at all happy we let the bear go in her front yard. Heck, Jack and I weren't happy either; but I bet the bear was. Oh yeah, he never revisited the bees. I guess the experience was too much for him.



I ended that May with a skunk complaint. Again, no problem. I've handled many. In this instance, a skunk had gotten into the habit of visiting a shed full of garbage. In the process it stirred up the neighbor's dog and ended up leaving its odoriferous calling card. The problem was that the lady's son was allergic to the skunk spray. After she agreed to have the garbage cleaned up I set the trap. Her husband was going to take the skunk away and release it in the woods after it was caught.

Several days later the lady called to say the skunk had been captured. Her husband hadn't removed it, though, because the cover had come off the trap. I told her to tell her husband to get another bag, cautiously drape it over the trap, wait five minutes, and then take the whole package away. I hung up and started to get ready for church when the phone rang again. Her husband wouldn't do it; he was afraid he'd get sprayed. When I told her I didn't want to get sprayed either, she replied with, "Well, that's what your getting paid for."

"Mam, do you or your husband buy a hunting license?" I asked.

"No," she replied.

"Well then, you don't help pay me. Did you get that garbage cleaned up yet?" I asked.

"No, not yet," she admitted.

I was quite upset, but I agreed to go get the skunk. I made it quite clear, however, that I wasn't going to reset the trap until the garbage was cleaned up.

As I was leaving the house my wife warned me not to show up at church smelling like a skunk. I assured her I wouldn't.

When I arrived at the scene the lady met me at the back door. A quiet person she was not. She was constantly yelling at her son to stay inside. I asked her not to yell, she was upsetting the skunk—and me, too. I took a piece of carpet and gingerly walked towards the trapped skunk. Just as I got close, the boy came charging out the door, with a dog in hot pursuit and with the lady screaming her head off. I probably don't need to tell you what happened. The dog bore the brunt of it, but if you've ever been around where a skunk has sprayed, you know there's no escaping the effects. The lady never did stop yelling. I loaded up the skunk and left with the words, "Clean up that garbage. I'm not coming back."

My family had already left for church by the time I got home. I took a quick bath, put on some nice smelling deodorant, threw my smelly clothes in the basement and headed for church.

On our way out after the service I thought I overheard somebody say something about smelling a skunk, but I think sometimes my wife talks too much.

Well, as you can see, a wildlife officer's job is exciting at times, to say the least. As I said earlier, the agency is trying to free us from some of these duties. We now have a system in place through which individuals can receive permits from the Game Commission that authorize them to handle nuisance animal complaints. They charge fees for their services, but believe me, they're earning every penny.

### Cover Painting by Mark Anderson

Chestnut-sided warblers used to be rare. During his explorations early in the 19th century, renowned ornithologist, John James Audubon saw only one. A hundred years later, however, chestnut-sided warblers were among the most common warblers in eastern North America. The second-growth forests that sprang up after the logging boom of the late 19th century were much to its liking. Look for this bird in the same areas where grouse are found—brushy areas, thickets, and aspen groves, for example. At this time of year, males are likely to be seen singing from treetops. Winter finds the chestnut-sided warbler in Nicaragua and Panama.



# Thornapples



Chuck Fergus

IT WAS AN old dam, broad and secure, with willows growing on it. The beavers had built it across one arm of the marsh, whose wet brown scent settled with the evening dew. I picked my way out onto the dam and sat with my back against an old snag. The sun had gone down, and the sky was changing over to orange and pink. Mosquitoes fussed at the back of my neck, while above, the small quiet shapes of bats flitted.

A bullfrog gave its gravelly call; a kingfisher rattled. Moments later a dark head came cutting through the still water. The beaver turned in my direction and dived, its dark supple form going down like chocolate syrup pouring.

A flight of wood ducks rushed over, crested heads showing in silhouette; they set their wings and dropped into another part of the marsh, the faint splash of their landing reaching my ears. I heard the raspy quacks of a mallard, and a string of harsh squawks as a great blue heron came laboring past, wings rowing so slowly, so mechanically, that I half-listened for a creaking of oarlocks.

An owl hooted, and my binoculars found the bird perched in a tree. Two feathery horns tufted its head, and its white necklace shone in the dim light.

The first stars twinkled.

Fish dimpled the pond's black skin.

Before leaving, I dipped a jar of

water; at home, rested and supped, I looked at a drop under a microscope: beasts like little bumpercars raced and shuttled, rotifers beat about, green-tinged euglenoids drifted (they are shaped like pointed-toe slippers), and transparent worms writhed. One creature locomoted by collapsing and extending, collapsing and extending, like a miniature periscope. Algae were spread throughout the sample, in snarls and tangles and as separate round balls, long chains, and branching filaments.

Some 95 percent of all wetlands in the United States are, like the marsh created by the beaver dam, inland freshwater wetlands. A few definitions are helpful.

A *marsh* has low vegetation rooted underwater or in saturated soil. No trees: the place is too wet. Grasses and sedges grow there, and in the deeper zones are cattails, reeds, rushes, water lilies, duckweed, and other water-loving plants.



—DOUG RIFER

A *swamp* is a wetland dominated by trees and shrubs. In Pennsylvania, common swamp trees include alder, elm, white cedar, red maple, and black ash; shrubs are willows, haws, high-bush blueberry, spicebush, and dogwoods.

A *bog* has acidic water and a spongy, sometimes floating, cover of sphagnum moss. Typical plants are mountain laurel, leatherleaf, cranberry, blueberry, sedges, and the insectivorous pitcher plant and sundew; trees include red maple, black spruce, and larch. Bogs often accumulate deep layers of peat, partially decomposed plant matter.

A forested floodplain wetland, or *bottomland forest*, lies low along a river or a stream and is frequently flooded. The trees may be sycamores, ashes, weeping willows, maples, oaks; shrubs include spicebush and silky dogwood, while jewelweed, skunk cabbage, and ferns are a few of the many plants growing underfoot.

There are other types of wetlands, not so readily classified but recognizable nonetheless: places too wet to

plow, too wet for a septic system, too wet for a basement, too wet to camp on.

The fecund life of a wetland depends on the plants: on the algae, which may exist in many tons per cubic acre of water; on the myriad plants rooted in the muck; and on the trees and shrubs growing in the surrounding wet soil. The plants convert solar energy into chemical energy, which ultimately becomes new growth of leaves and stems, branches and trunks. A key byproduct of the process is life-sustaining oxygen.

In the water, algae are eaten by a host of minute animals like the ones I had seen under the microscope, and by tiny crustaceans and insect larvae and tadpoles and many others, in turn gobbled by larger crustaceans and larger insect larvae and worms—preyed upon, in *their* turn, by frogs, ducks, turtles and fish.

Then there is the great mass of plant matter—blueberry leaves, cattail stems, grasses, sedges, spikerushes and pickerelweeds and pond lilies—that dies and decays, yielding a rich detritus





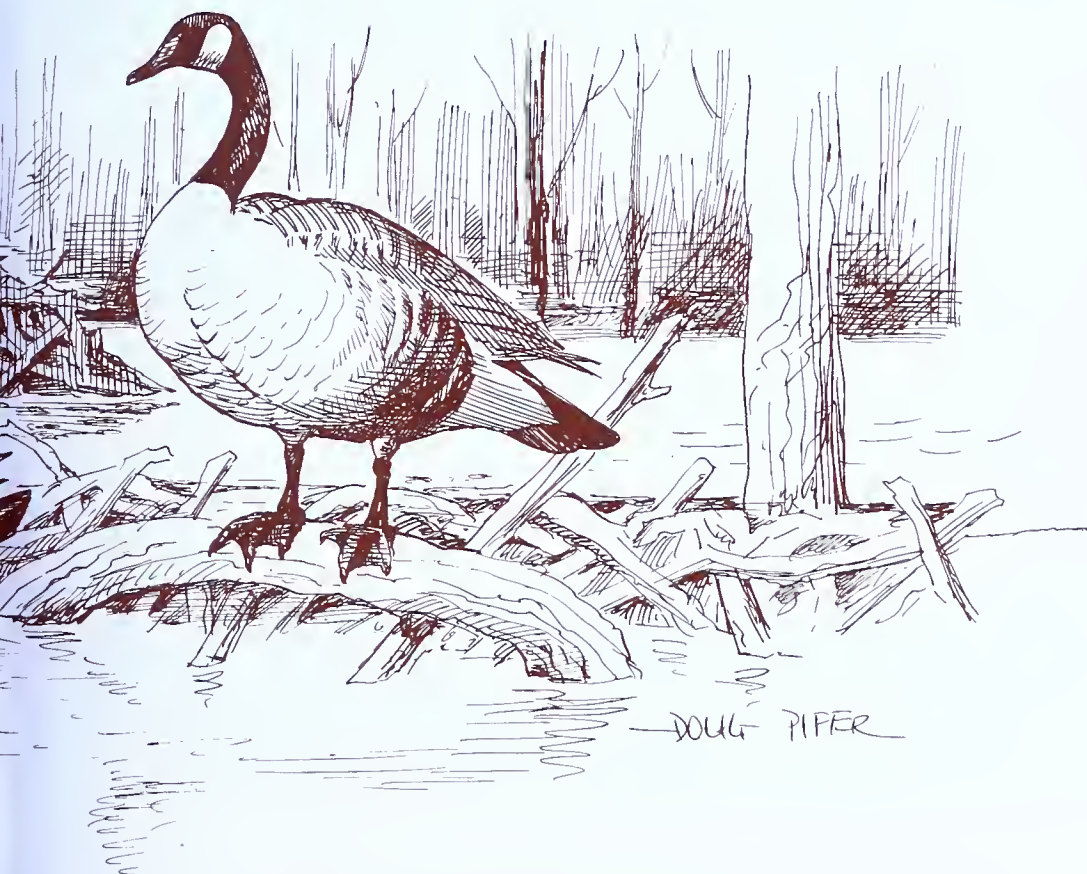
that provides nutrients for the multitudinous tiny life forms in the water. Thanks to this constant recycling of organic matter, an acre of wetland is more productive than an acre of the richest cropland.

The food chain in a wetland forms a gyre so intricate that it can make you dizzy to think about. (Or guilty, when, after watching bumpercars and whirligigs through a microscope, you rinse the slide under the tap.)

Wildlife use wetlands like they're going out of style. Bobcats, mink, and weasels are among the predators residing near the top of the eat-and-be-eaten chain. Other furbearers from muskrats to raccoons feed and breed there. Where wetlands fringe lakes and rivers, fish use them as spawning and nursery grounds. Reptiles and amphibians—snakes, turtles, salamanders, frogs—partake of the abundant food and cover. Many birds use wetlands for part or all of their life cycles. And no less than one third of our threatened and endangered species require wetland habitat.

Wetlands are also oases for nature-loving humans. A partial and catholic listing of the animals I've seen recently in wetlands includes marsh hawks, ospreys, woodcock, bluebirds, cedar waxwings, spotted salamanders, mergansers, red-shouldered hawks, and big buck deer. A few weeks ago I flushed a grouse out of an alder tangle where I was floundering around in hip-boots—and surprising the occasional wood duck as well. We don't usually think of rabbits and pheasants as wetland dwellers, but they often find escape and wintering cover in soupy, brush-filled streamcourses, critical habitat in areas that support little other cover because they are farmed intensively.

Northeastern Pennsylvania is blessed with hundreds of bogs and swamps, vital habitat for otters, bobcats, and snowshoe hares. In a study done in the Poconos, 76 percent of all radio locations made on transmitter-equipped black bears placed them in wetlands—which made up only 7 percent of the habitat in the study area.



Wetlands do more good than most people realize. They act as water purification plants—one scientist has called them “nature’s kidneys.” A study at Tinicum Marsh, Philadelphia, demonstrated that the marsh cleanses river water percolating through it by trapping and decomposing phosphates, nitrates, and organic matter. Researchers at Penn State University have grown a bog in a basin: they tilt the fiber glass basin, run acid-tainted water through it, and monitor what comes out. Sphagnum moss in the artificial bog apparently removes the pollutants iron and manganese from the water; scientists believe that manmade wetlands can renovate the acidic, iron- and manganese-laden streams flowing out of abandoned coal mines.

Wetlands replenish groundwater. They also absorb heavy rains, soaking up the potential floodwaters and releasing them gradually. Along the Charles River in Massachusetts, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers opted to buy floodplain wetlands rather than build expensive dikes and dams to protect Boston. The Corps figured out that if 8400 acres of wetlands in the river basin were drained, flood damage would increase by \$17 million a year.

If wetlands are so valuable—and it’s possible that their most important functions and properties have yet to be identified—then why have we destroyed so many of them? Since America was settled, we have filled in or drained more than half of the wetlands that originally graced the continent. Turned them into cropfields and housing developments and parking lots and factories, or simply filled them in with garbage.

Fortunately our attitude toward wetlands has been changing: from ab-

horrence and aversion to a tentative appreciation of these diverse, life-brimming places. In a way, my personal relationship with wetlands has paralleled that of society’s. I came late to wetlands; there weren’t many of them around where I grew up (or so I thought), nor did I wish to venture into places where I might mire in the muck, never to be seen again. But as I came to know wetlands better, I began to appreciate them and to crave the solitude and beauty they offer.

I remember a wet-footed day among the alders, when we flushed it must have been a dozen woodcock that had flighted in the night before on a chill north wind. I remember a heron, his marigold eye seeing me as no more than a rock; how he snatched a fish, worked it down his snaky neck, stared at me again, resaw me, shrieked, and hauled himself into the air. I remember threading a canoe through the flooded timber of Shohola swamp, teal and mallards slapping up, trailing brilliant drops of sun.

And I remember finding with delight, and copying down to share, part of the poem “Inversnaid” by Gerard Manley Hopkins, an English Jesuit priest writing in the nineteenth century:

*“What would the world be, once  
bereft  
Of wet and of wildness? Let them  
be left,  
O let them be left, wildness and  
wet;  
Long live the weeds and the wil-  
derness yet.”*

(This is the first part of a two-part article.)

## Thoughts While Walking

*And I left my gun forever standing lonely in the hall.*

— Archibald Rutledge





**DAVE KISSINGER, Berwick, doesn't just shoot primitive bows and arrows, he makes them, too, out of the same materials and in the same ways as early American Indians.**

**Early American . . .**

## INDIAN ARCHERY

**By Keith C. Schuyler**

**I**T'S APPARENT that quite a few bow hunters have reverted to the recurve bow, which came into vogue after World War II, and some even back to the longbow of English fame. There's no question these older designs heighten the challenge archers face when stalking whitetails, and that they limit an archer's capabilities, to an extent depending upon whether modern sights and arrows are employed.

Other archers, who aren't so apparent, seek out replicas of equipment used by early American Indians. Not all of these modern artifacts are used for hunting. Some owners just like to have them as show pieces or to round out collections. Those who do use bows and arrows identical to the kinds Indians used normally insist that they be

constructed exactly as the natives made them.

Until meeting David M. Kissinger at a local sportsmen's show a few months ago, I wasn't aware of this interest, despite the fact he lives in Berwick, less than two miles from my rural home, and has been making authentic reproductions of Indian archery equipment for several years. At first glance, his display appeared to be the usual archery exhibit. I snapped to attention, though, when I noticed he was applying sinew to the back of a bow on which he was working.

Closer attention to the work this 35-year-old bowyer does as an avocation revealed much more. Like many, Dave became interested in archery as a youngster. He made his first longbow

## STRAIGHT FROM THE BOWSTRING

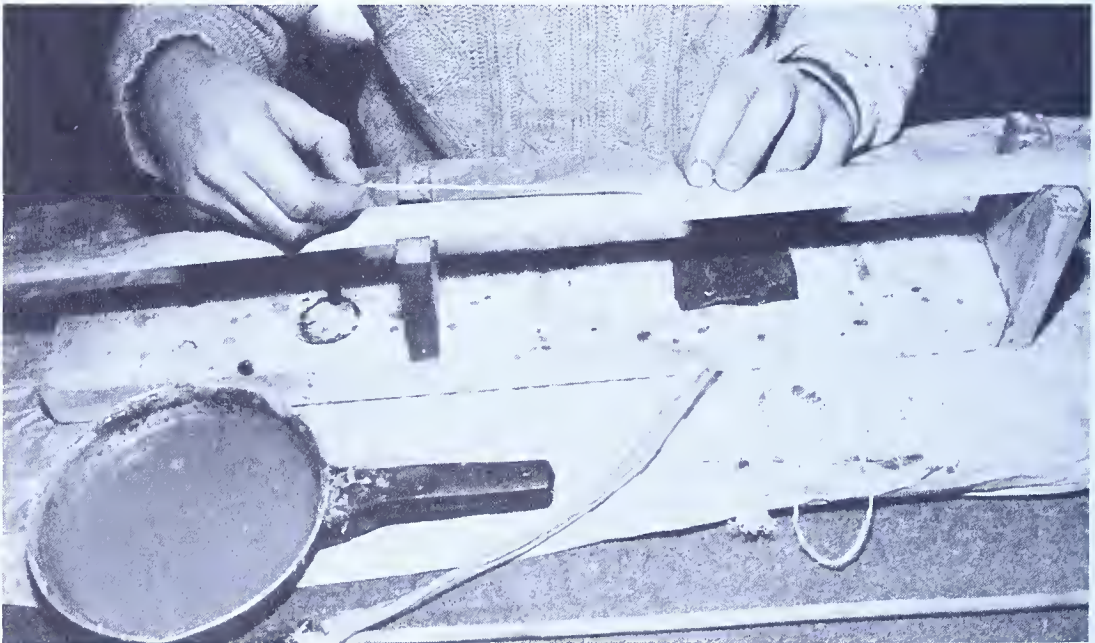
of green wood and used long suckers growing from the trunk of a cherry tree as arrows. He may have inherited part of his interest from his great great grandmother, who was a Shawnee Indian from the Nanticoke area. Dave's interest in archery really began to grow when, at age 20, while living in Detroit, he made a bow from sassafras and an arrow of heat-straightened maple with a two-feather fletch. With this improbable combination he hunted a woodlot in the suburbs and killed his first game—a cottontail rabbit. He was hooked. But it wasn't until five years ago that his growing interest produced a plain D-shape bow of 60 pounds, at 25 inches draw, with which he killed a 9-point buck in Pennsylvania.

Commercially producing authentic replicas of Indian bows, arrows and other tackle presented a serious chal-

lenge for Dave. Not only did it require extensive study to determine how the native Americans made them, finding the proper woods and developing the skills to work them also was a time consuming and trial and error process. Among his most reliable sources of information were the books, *American Indian Archery*, by Reginald and Gladys Laubin, and *Native American Bows*, by T. M. Hamilton. He also studied everything available in *Ishi*, the last Yahi Indian, and *Bows and Arrows*, by Saxton Pope.

Attempts to accurately describe the work of Northeastern Indians gets somewhat confusing because many Eastern Indians were driven West, where their skills became influenced by resident Indians. Although there were variations dictated chiefly by materials available in specific regions, as well as religious beliefs, many of the building techniques used by Eastern and Western tribes were similar. Bow strings, for example, were made by some Indians from bear intestines, but other tribes considered the bear a spiritual symbol and would not kill one. Use of an animal's brains to cure its hide, however, seemed universal. Too, use of sinew to

**ALTHOUGH HE uses modern drawknives, pocket knives and a halfround file, Dave uses no power tools. Each custom bow requires 40 to 60 hours of labor to complete.**





**TO MAKE authentic strings and for backing bows, ligaments, center, are beaten with a club on a rock until the sinews, right, separate.**

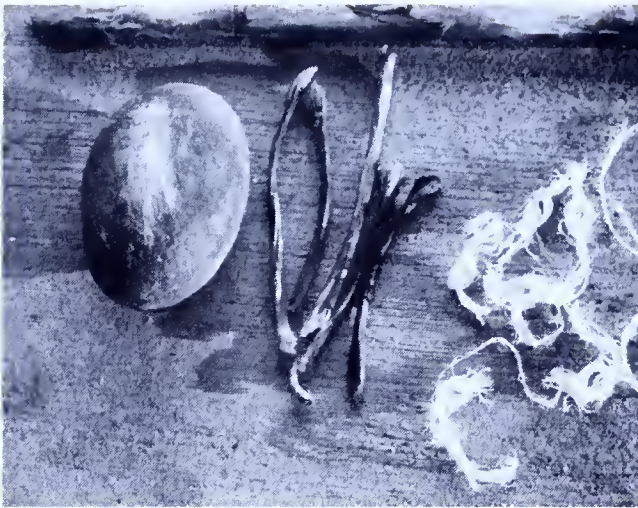
fasten fletching and heads to arrow shafts, and to back bows, was common knowledge. Backing, then as now, is used to prevent splintering and to add strength to the basic wood in the bow itself.

It was Kissinger's aim to manufacture authentic bows and arrows and assorted tackle to match those produced before the arrival of the white man. That precluded the use of steel and other modern materials to bind any parts, yet he still had to come up with a combination suitable for hunting both big and small game.

For wood, Dave relies chiefly on ash or hickory because they're readily available. Although Indians generally used small trees, because of the limits of their stone axes, Dave looks for larger wood. He prefers the outer layers of the heart wood where, as determined by the growth rings, the wood is firmer. However, because ash and hickory are more susceptible to vagaries of the weather, and have more of a tendency to take a set in the direction of the string, he considers osage orange, which comes chiefly from the southern part of the state, as the best material.

Dave prefers wood cut in January or February, when the sap is down. Wood cut in other months must be soaked in running water to leach out the sap. After being cut hickory and ash are aged from one to two years, osage orange for three. Another two weeks of drying time is needed after a bow is finished, to let the materials used in construction completely dry.

Sinew Dave uses comes primarily from ligaments of the hind leg on white-tailed deer. Because the ligaments harden quickly after being cut from the animal, it's necessary to remove the hard outer layer to get at the inner fibers. Next, the ligaments are beaten with a wooden club against a



stone. Fibers can then be softened in water, but holding them in the mouth to soak them in saliva gives them better pliability. Larger sinew can be obtained from moose, elk and caribou, for example, but they are not so readily available.

There also is a long ligament in a deer's back, but these are difficult to obtain in quantity. Others are gathered from deer processing plants during the hunting seasons. It is also at such places where Dave obtains the deer brains he uses to tan hides.

### Excellent Glue

To make an excellent glue, a mixture of rawhide, brain-tanned skin scraps, and sinew are simmered in a pan or kettle, with water occasionally replaced until the mixture reaches the desired consistency. Then the separated sinew fibers are carefully laid in strips against the back of the bow for its full length. At least three layers are necessary to obtain the thickness needed to protect the wood and prevent the lifting of small splinters that can lead to a major fracture.

Short sections of sinew may be formed around the bow to strengthen it at critical points. Strips of deer hide, treated with brains, are used as grips. The completed bow is normally then rubbed with deer tallow or brains as a sealant if complete authenticity is desired. Dave admits, however, that



**DAVE MAKES** his bows from either hickory, ash or osage orange. Arrow shafts are generally made from osier, willow, viburnum or a marsh reed. Heads are of jasper, quartzite or chert.

polyurethane or tung oil give better results. Flat bows come in 2-inch increments, from 48 to 52 inches in length. If longbows are desired, they are cut to 64 inches.

Smaller sinew fibers are used to tie both ends of the feathers to the arrow shaft. They also are used to support the nocks, to prevent them from splitting, and to bind the shaft wood where the head is affixed.

Arrow shafts are generally made from osier, willow, a viburnum—appropriately called arrowwood—or a marsh reed similar to bamboo. These were materials readily available to the Eastern Indian, although more durable shaft wood can be substituted if desired.

Heads, to be authentic for eastern arrows, are formed primarily of jasper, quartzite or chert. They must be chipped to the desired shape by hand, a most laborious process.

The one concession Kissinger makes to modernity is in the strings. He uses dacron, unless the customer insists on an authentic string of gut, sinew or deerskin. Authentic strings are better for show. They are affected too much

by weather to be practical for hunting, however, and a broken string can result in a broken bow.

If paint trim is desired on bows or arrows, Dave offers a brown, made from walnut husks; black, from a combination of charred wood and sumac tassles; and red, from poke berries.

For tools, Dave relies more or less on modern drawknives, pocket knives and a halfround file. He uses no power tools, though. Primitive stone and shell cutting implements extend the building process just too long. Even so, the labor involved makes the price of one of Dave's primitive bows comparable to modern factory-made equipment. Bows start at \$175 for a 48-inch, D-style bow; \$25 is added for each additional two inches. Recurves of hickory or ash start at \$200, a modified working recurve at \$235. Osage orange bows begin at \$300. All are custom made and each requires from 40 to 60 hours of labor.

Arrows are \$25 to \$35 *each*, with stone or bone heads.

Dave doesn't have much competition for his authentic artifacts. He knows of only one other source—in Texas.





**BILL MAXEINER** and his son **Tom**, **Ford City**, are working up a batch of 223 loads using the right approach. As Bill says, "I make 'em all the same."

## Reloading for Varmint Accuracy

By **Don Lewis**

Photos by **Helen Lewis**

I LEANED back with a sense of accomplishment; five shots in one jagged hole wasn't up to benchrest accuracy, but it sure was tops for a hay-field grizzly rifle.

If I continued to get groups well under an inch at 100 yards with the 219 Donaldson Wasp, my long quest for a top accuracy load would be over.

Actually, the 219 Wasp had been turning in 5-shot groups around the inch mark at 100 yards during several weeks of sporadic testing. To start with, I tried several loads of 4895 behind a Speer 50-grain spitzer bullet. Next I opted for a load of 4198 behind a Sierra 52-grain Hollow Point Boat Tail.

That was followed by a load of 4320 with a 55-grain Speer. Later I switched to Hornady bullets that gave similar results. Throughout my experimenting I stuck with powder charges recommended in the *Speer Reloading Manual for Wildcat Cartridges*.

All the loads produced groups well within the bounds of woodchuck accuracy, but I had a nagging feeling there was a load that would bring out the very best in the cartridge Harvey Donaldson called the Wasp. Harvey made the Wasp from 219 Zipper brass by shortening, re-necking and fire-forming the shoulder. The Wasp went on to win many benchrest matches



**IT TOOK** some time, but Lewis eventually found a load that brought out the best in his 219 Donaldson Wasp as this chuck, taken at over 250 yards, proves.

when shot from special, heavy barrel, single shot bolt action rifles. Unlike Donaldson I made my Wasp cases from 30-30 brass, using RCBS swaging and reloading dies. I was getting such consistent groups from all the primer/powder/bullet combinations that I knew I had a good rifle. Still, my paramount goal was to find the most accurate load.

The cold winds of fall stopped the chuck hunting and my testing the 219 Wasp. In fact, the testing was put on the back burner. It was several years later before I finally hit paydirt. I got back to the benchrest with the 219 when Hodgdon Powder Company sent me several cans of their BL-C, Lot No. 2 powder, which they claimed was excellent for benchrest work and cartridges the size of the 219 Wasp. That turned on the testing light when I realized this might be the powder I was looking for.

About the same time, I got a batch of Remington's 52-grain 224 Benchrest bullets for testing. I figured those bullets and the Hodgdon powder would make a perfect marriage with a CCI 200 primer. I didn't realize it right then, but I had my foot in the accuracy door.

As always, I started chronographing with the lowest powder charge sug-

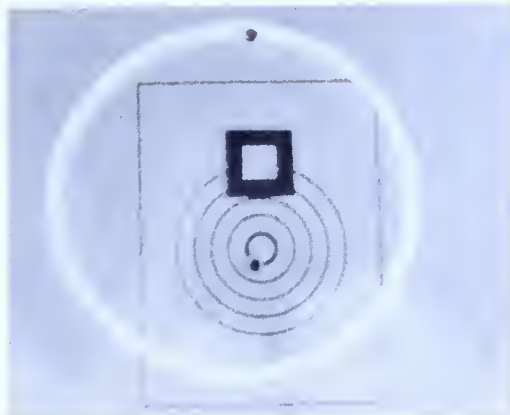
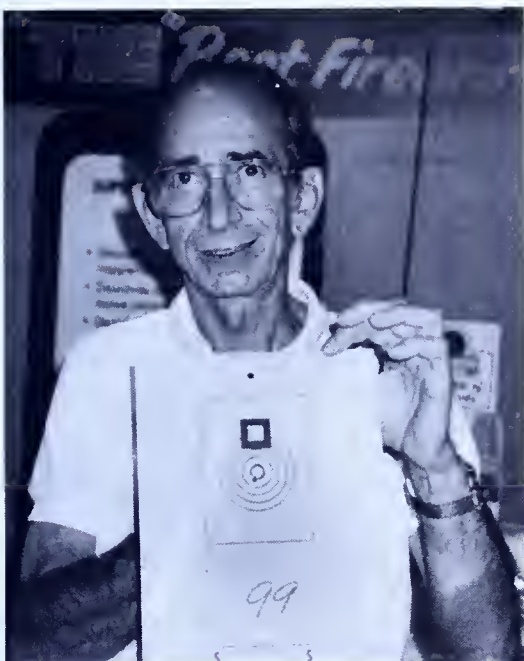
gested in the Speer manual. Accuracy was my prime goal, but I also knew I needed velocity readings in the 3300 fps category to make the Wasp effective up to 300 yards. I finally settled on the load of BL-C2 that gave an instrumental reading at 15 feet of 3338 fps. Back at the muzzle, that would have been a few feet faster. I had the velocity I wanted; the main test was yet to come. Doubts and suspicions plagued my mind as I nestled the heavy-barrel Wasp on the sandbags and made a minor focusing adjustment on the target scope.

The first 5-shot group fell within an inch, but was far from what I was expecting. After studying the group for a few seconds, I realized that one shot had gone noticeably astray. The remainder were not in one hole, but there wasn't much white paper between the holes. I dry fired the rifle several times and found that the front set trigger was not releasing each time from the same amount of pressure. I disassembled the rifle and repaired that minor problem in less time than it takes to load a box of ammo.

I fired a half dozen rounds to reseal the action and tightened the stock screws before getting down to serious business. I had the bull by the horns. I fired two 5-shot one-holers. Then I made the mistake of boasting to Helen about my super results. She sat down and promptly put five shots in one jagged hole. To add insult to injury, she informed me the Wasp was just perfect







**SAL VENTIMIGLIA**, Chagrin Falls, Ohio, displays a 5-shot group, above, that measures only .099 of an inch. Such accuracy was unheard of just a few decades ago.

for her woodchuck hunting requirements. There's no justice in a long marriage.

I have related the episode of getting my 219 Donaldson Wasps to perform to a high degree of accuracy, but that's just half the story. Reloading the cartridge is the other half. The accurate reloaded cartridge is by no means a product of slipshod reloading procedures.

First we have to understand accuracy. A 300 H&H Magnum that cuts a two-inch group at 100 yards is accurate for what it is designed for. The 219 Wasp that Marcy Prescott used to win the Donaldson Trophy at Johnstown, N.Y. in 1948 took top honors with a 1½-inch 10-shot group at 200 yards. Prescott, by the way, reloaded the same case over and over again, right at the benchrest, with an Ideal "nut cracker" reloading tool. Today, however, we have the likes of Sal Ventimiglia, of Chagrin Falls, Ohio, (maker of SHOOTER'S CHOICE bore cleaner) who put five shots in .071 for his top group and won all the honors with an aggregate of .171 for 25 shots with his 6PPC bench rifle topped with a 30X Leupold. I'll have more on Sal in a later column.

It's hard to believe that only 40 years

ago a 1½-inch group at 200 yards (around ¾-inch at 100 yards) would command first place while today it takes a 25-shot 100-yard aggregate far less than 200-thousandths of an inch to win top money. What brought about such a remarkable improvement in so short a time?

By the mid-1950s, the quarter-minute rifle was the ultimate goal of the benchrest crowd. More and more benchrest outfits carried stainless steel barrels instead of the conventional chrome-moly types. Believe it or not, stainless is not harder than chrome-moly. Stainless has a lower Rockwell hardness reading, but a barrel with a high chrome content, such as stainless, resists high temperatures better than carbon or chrome-moly barrels.

I have to separate the benchrest shooter from the varmint hunter. They're in different leagues. The demands on the BR shooter are far greater than they are on the heavy-barrel varmint buff. The varmint fan can get a lot of enjoyment from a conventional factory-built heavy-barrel using either factory or reloaded ammo. The benchrest, on the other hand, is a perfectionist. He needs the ultimate in a rifle and in his ammo. No stone is left unturned to have each cartridge exactly alike. Such an approach can pay off for the varmint hunter, too.

Some reloaders have a tendency to



### Question

May I put out a salt block at camp and hunt out back?

### Answer

Yes, but the salt block and residue must be removed 30 days prior to the area being hunted or the Pennsylvania Game Commission can post the area against hunting for 30 days after the salt block or "bait" has been removed.

just fill the cases. Some hunters are more fussy than others, but many just keep reloading the same shells time after time. That's not the best approach if you really want to crank out top reloads.

Weighing unprimed brass is not as common a practice as it once was, but weighing a hundred cases will show some surprising variations in weights. It's wise to at least keep the heavier cases, which indicates thicker brass, separate from the lighter ones. That's more important when using a batch of mixed brass. While it's not a good policy to use mixed brands, the truth is we all do.

Checking the primer pockets and flash holes of a few dozen cases will quickly show that there also are wide variations in flash hole diameters. I'm positive few handloaders own a set of flash hole gauges. Each gauge has a go and no-go pin. On a 222, the .081 pin should enter the flash hole with ease, but the .089 pin on the other end of the gauge definitely should not. A number 45 drill mikes out to about .082. Years back some 222 reloaders used the number 45 drill and made all smaller flash holes .082. Cases with holes larger

than .082 were discarded, or at least separated into batches according to flash hole diameters. When the flash hole is too large more of the primer flame enters the case which, in turn, increases chamber pressure. That means that flash holes close to maximum diameter require reduced powder charges. Consistent ignition of powder charges come from flash holes of the same diameter. It's not so much the diameter of the flash hole that's important, but that all holes are the same diameter.

Some reloaders feel cleaning primer pockets is a waste of time; I don't agree. I have primer pocket brushes for both large and small primers. I built a regular machine with conventional drill chucks to hold the brushes, but a common 1/4-horsepower electric drill works as well. I full length resize the case, clean the primer pocket and then the inside of the case, and then blow all the residue away with a strong blast of compressed air.

Cases should be checked periodically for length. Benchresters do not full length resize their cases, but I'm a strong advocate for full length resizing hunting ammo. When the brass is being resized, residue on the inside is loosened. A follow up with a brass or bristle brush will then remove that residue.

Inside neck reaming has lost much of its appeal with the BR crowd. Outside neck turning with special rigs or lathes is still part of the BR game, but the varmint shooter isn't working with such close chamber tolerances. I have laboriously neck-turned cases, and even reamed the inside of the neck, but the gain was minimal, if any, in factory varmint rifles. Thinning the neck walls excessively can cause the neck to lose its grip on the bullet. From my point of view, if there are no bullet seating problems or indications of neck rubbing in the chamber, it's best to leave well enough alone.

When reloading was really getting a foothold in the shooting fraternity, weighing the powder charge was con-

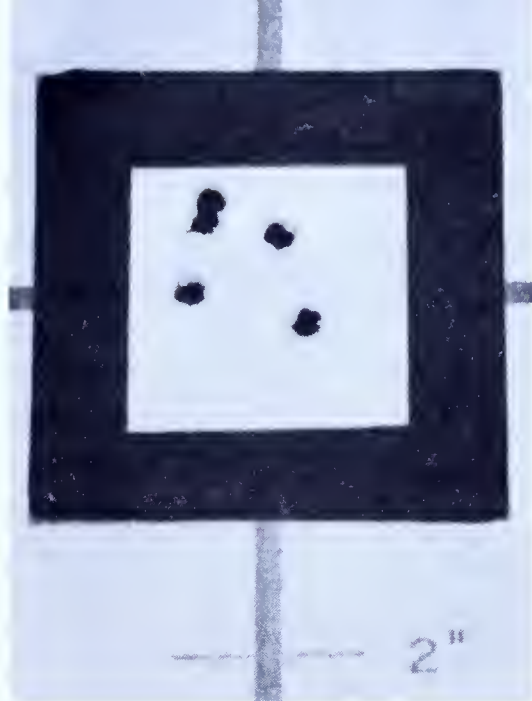


LEWIS fired this 5-shot group at 200 yards with a Remington M700 22-250. Although not up to competitive benchrest standards, it's more than adequate for hunting, and attainable to those reloaders who want the most from their rifles.

sidered the most important task of all. It's amusing now to think back on how much time and effort we put into getting the exact charge weight in each case. Weight, by itself, does not guarantee accuracy. Powder charges are weighed primarily to adjust the powder measure so it throws a certain charge. A powder measure that has a micrometric adjustment will throw charges accurately enough to assure consistent muzzle velocities, providing the operator throws each charge with the same force and rhythm. That's the deciding factor in operating a powder measure. As a precaution, I visually check all powder charges and weigh any that looks differently from the rest. Also, when using long grain powder, I dump the powder back into the hopper if there is a significant hang up in the measure.

Bullet seating is another controversial factor in the reloading game. Bullet alignment is an important part of the seating process. Case mouths should be slightly chamfered to help funnel in flat base bullets so they aren't tilted in relation to the bore. Regular tools are available to assure straightness in bullet seating.

In hunting ammo I seat bullets such that there is a slight jump into the rifling. On critical varmint ammo, where the throat characteristics are



known, I allow the ogive of the bullet to touch the lands. Normally, however, it's best to allow some space between the bullet and the lands. In that case, the bullet moves against the lands from the primer force. When loading for a rifle with a box-type magazine, be absolutely certain the bullets are seated deep enough to allow the cartridges to fit into the magazine. Always use a dummy cartridge when checking bullet seating depths.

I have touched on just a few of the requirements for good reloading. Duplication is the answer. Everything from primer seating to bullet seating must be the same. That's the answer. My good friend, Bill Maxeiner of Ford City said, "I make em' all the same." He has the right approach.

**Atlantic Salmon Fishing**, by L. James Bashline, Stackpole Books, Cameron & Kelker Streets, Harrisburg, Pa. 17105, 224 pp., \$27.95 postpaid. My old hunting buddy and former GAME NEWS editor Jim Bashline has written another book. It's about fishing. For Atlantic salmon. Now, I've never caught a salmon of any kind. In fact, I've never caught a fish. The only thing I've ever written about them was called "Fish is a Four-Letter Word," and nobody would publish it—maybe because the title told everything I know about such critters. No matter. Jim knows enough about fish in general and Atlantic salmon in particular for both of us and a bunch of friends. So if you'd like a lot of information from an expert, written in a highly readable style, get this one. If you're not into words, there's a lot of good photos, both color and black and white, plus useful line drawings. —*Bob Bell*

# *In the wind*

bob mitchell



According to a report by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, 44 of 49 states contacted—Hawaii wasn't—have waterfowl stamp and print programs. Most states, including Pennsylvania, select art by contest. Texas has the most successful stamp-print program, averaging over a million dollars a year from stamp and print sales.

The city of Arcata, California is using the town's sewage to enhance fish and wildlife habitat. As reported by the Wildlife Management Institute, solids from the sewage are turned into fertilizers and applied to city parks. Remaining wastewater is filtered through 154 acres of ponds, lagoons and marshes before being pumped, crystal clear, into Humboldt Bay. Several other cities are evaluating this natural way of cleaning sewage.

**In 1987 Minnesota lead the 34 states with income tax checkoffs for wildlife. Nearly 8 percent (twice the national average) of all taxpayers contributed to the state's nongame wildlife fund, resulting in a total of \$835,000 for the year.**

To offset the costs of search and rescue missions, which average \$300,000 a year, a 25 cent surcharge has been added to the cost of Colorado hunting and fishing licenses. The money will be placed in a Search and Rescue Fund and used to reimburse any agency or organization for expenses incurred while rescuing licensed hunters or fishermen, whether or not they were hunting or fishing at the time they became lost.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources estimates that last year the state's 300,000 deer hunters spent \$135 million (\$450 per hunter) on food, lodging, travel, licenses and other items necessary for the sport. As reported by the Boone & Crockett Club, deer harvests in the Buckeye State have risen from less than 3000 deer a year during the 1960s to nearly 70,000 now.

The Missouri Department of Conservation hopes to have ruffed grouse established in all suitable areas of the state by 1993. Following sporadic attempts that began in 1959, the state actually got this ambitious project started in 1978, when long-term arrangements were made with Indiana and other states to trade grouse for turkeys (3 for 1). Since then Missouri has been releasing grouse in groups of 70 to 80 and, with telemetry equipment, monitoring their success. At one site, for example, of 77 birds released in the fall, only 19 (8 hens) survived until April. While established grouse have home ranges 10 to 40 acres in size, the stocked birds range over 500 acres after release, and one bird traveled 15 air miles. Based on these and other findings, Missouri is going to evaluate habitat quality over larger areas when selecting future release site.

**A record 1190 brown/grizzly bears (they're considered the same species now) were taken in Alaska last year. Following years when the harvests averaged about 800 per year, bear numbers have risen, resulting in an average harvest of 1100 animals over the past four years.**

Wisconsin wildlife officials were expecting the state's 700,000 hunters to harvest 300,000 whitetails last year, 15 percent more than in 1986. The state had a pre-season deer population of about 900,000, and was able to issue either-sex permits to two out of every three hunters who applied for them.

North Carolina taxpayers donated a record \$384,759 to the state's Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Fund last year, 16 percent more than the previous year's contributions. In the four years since the state's checkoff program began, \$1.2 million has been donated.





*The Wingless Crow*, by Chuck Fergus, is a collection of thirty-three Thornapples columns which have appeared in GAME NEWS. The nearly 200 pages of entertaining reading will appeal to Fergus fans as they reread these selected essays as well as to those who've yet to discover the joys of Thornapples. This top quality hardcover books costs \$10, delivered, and can be ordered from the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept AR, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.



*Snowy Egret*, by John Pritko, is the sixth limited edition fine art print available through the Pennsylvania Game Commission's Working Together for Wildlife program. As with the previous editions, *Snowy Egret* is limited to 600 signed and numbered prints. Image size is approximately 15 × 22½ inches, printed on acid-free 100 percent rag paper. Price is \$125; framed prints are an additional \$97.50. Requests for specific numbers will be satisfied on a first-come, first-served basis. Limited numbers of *Country Lane Kestrel* and *Autumn Challenge*, 1986 and 1987 prints, are still available. Orders should be sent to the Pennsylvania Game Commission, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Dept. AR, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.



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**COVER PAINTING BY DENNIS BURKHART**  
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PENNSYLVANIA GAME NEWS (ISSN 0031-451X) is published monthly for \$6.00 per year, \$16.50 for three years, or membership in Pennsylvania's Cooperative Farm-Game Project or Safety Zone Project; to Canada and all other foreign countries, \$7.00 U.S. currency, per year. Published by the Pennsylvania Game Commission, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, Pa. 17110-9797. Phone (717) 787-4250. Second-class postage paid at Harrisburg, Pa. **CHANGE OF ADDRESS: POSTMASTER:** Send both old and new addresses to Pennsylvania Game Commission. Allow six weeks for processing. Material accepted is subject to our requirements for editing and revising. Author payment covers all rights and title to accepted material, including manuscripts, photographs, drawings and illustrations. No information contained in this magazine may be used for advertising or commercial purposes. Copyright © 1988 by the Pennsylvania Game Commission. All rights reserved.

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## For Wildlife

**W**E'RE FORTUNATE in Pennsylvania. We have public hunting areas in almost every nook and cranny in the state. There isn't a sportsman in the commonwealth who doesn't have nearby land where he's free to hunt or trap.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources has around two million acres of state forests and state parks, and there are over 500,000 acres of federal land in the Allegheny National Forest. They were obtained and are being maintained with general tax monies and are managed for multiple uses, which, with small exceptions, include hunting and trapping.

Pennsylvanians also enjoy State Game Lands. These, however, have been purchased almost exclusively by hunters and trappers. More than 300 tracts which total over 1.3 million acres have been purchased since 1920. State Game Lands are managed for wildlife.

Wildlife management activities actually enhance outdoor recreation and, through generous public use policies, the agency encourages hikers, photographers, fishermen and other outdoor enthusiasts to take full advantage of what State Game Lands offer.

While year round public use, as long as it's compatible with agency objectives (wildlife), has always been encouraged, some dark clouds are appearing on the horizon. On an increasing number of State Game Lands, especially those near densely populated areas, and those offering special or unique outdoor opportunities, high public use is leading to problems.

First, in an increasing number of locations, overwhelming use is making it difficult for many animals, especially waterfowl, to successfully raise their young. Sportsmen aren't permitted to train dogs on State Game Lands when wildlife are having young. Maybe some other activities should also be restricted in certain areas when wildlife is particularly susceptible to relentless disturbances.

A second problem is more subtle, but with more profound ramifications. Increasing complaints are being voiced by nonhunters about having to share State Game Lands with hunters. Nonhunters are getting bad impressions of hunters while freely taking advantage of lands hunters have purchased.

A few years ago I was grouse hunting on a relatively small but extremely popular State Game Lands in the southeast. I was walking through some thick cover on a sidehill when I heard voices. I spied two small children scampering along a trail out in front of me. Two adults, their parents I assume, were trailing along behind. I remained motionless and watched them pass. They never noticed me. I wasn't at all comfortable, though. I knew if a grouse flushed and I shot, I would have shattered that family's enjoyment and left four people with a bad taste of hunting.

Well, I left; I haven't gone hunting there since, and I probably never will again. That's my solution, but it's no solution to the problem. Hunters should not feel excluded from the very lands we've purchased. Nor should we have our reputations tarnished just because some unenlightened folks don't have the slightest idea what State Game Lands represent.

Most people, especially nonhunters, can't distinguish between one type of public property and another. In coming years, however, increased emphasis is going to be placed on making the general public aware of what State Game Lands are, what they're for, and who paid for them. Sportsmen should take pride in State Game Lands. We've paid for them, and it's about time we took credit for what they mean to all Pennsylvanians. — *Bob Mitchell*





# A Place For All Seasons

By Gene Tollini

## Summer

**I** PARK the car in the shade of a big white oak and then pause in the coolness to stretch and look around. This is a special place. Back in the '20s, my father has told me, a small railroad station on the "Pennsy" was here. Elbel station. Here is where my grandparents, father and an uncle first set foot on Pennsylvania soil. This is where their trip across the Atlantic from the old country ended. And it was under these rolling hills that they would work; my grandfather and father were coal miners.

Not a trace of the station is left, and now even the old tracks and ties are gone. The railroad bed remaining provides easy access to what we have come to call Elbel Valley. Many times a year I come to Elbel Valley, to do many things, but always to appreciate and enjoy the beauty. Today I have come here to take a long slow jog over the old railroad bed. Jogging has come to mean almost as much to me as hunting, but when I can do some running in a

place such as this, the two activities are about equal in providing a rewarding sense and direction to life.

A few houses at the lower end of the valley, two miles away, signal the beginning of civilization. That's where I will turn around. The summer breeze is blowing just enough to keep me cool and to make the leaves turn a bit. Starting out I scare a groundhog off the bed and into some brush. Birds fly from tree to tree ahead of me then veer off to the sides. On one such run I remember flushing seven grouse from the brushy hillside to my right. Today, none. Perhaps they are to the left, down along the cool waters of Elbel Creek. Four miles pass too quickly. I am back at the car, dripping sweat onto the cinders of the bed, filling my lungs with the sweet summer air and my nostrils with its special smells. Near the old station site I cool down on a room-size patch of teaberries, lying on my back to better see the blueness of the sky. Soon I will have to go, but right now everything is right with my world.

When I think of the valley thoughts



**THE SNOWY EGRET** is the seventh species in the Game Commission's Working Together for Wildlife program. The program is intended to generate support for nongame animals. This year's snowy egret patch is priced at \$3, delivered. Patches of the bluebird, bobcat, kestrel and elk are still available; those of the osprey and river otter are sold out. Decals (\$1 each) of the first six species are still available, but none of the egret is being made. Order from the Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.

of hunting are foremost. Here is where my father took me when I was new to the sport; here is where I hunt today; and here is where I will take my son to hunt when he is of age. Before my time these woods were mostly slashings with few tall trees. It was, according to my father, a haven for rabbits and grouse, and the source of many a meal during a time when hunting was one of the main means of putting meat on the table. My father trapped as well and took mink and muskrats from Elbel Creek and a few weasels from the surrounding woods. It was a rare and special event to see a deer. To hunt whitetails you had to go "up to the mountains."

Now trees are dominant and brush the exception, so there are some grouse and few rabbits. But deer now abound and, two years ago, I saw a bear up in

a hemlock. I have seen a few turkey flocks. My first buck came from the valley and, truth to be told, so did a few misses and skunkings. That's hunting.

When I began to hunt, in the early '60s, the deer herd was well established here. A few men still made the trip to the mountains, but more and more local folks just stayed home to hunt areas such as Elbel. Every year I seemed to see more and more neighbors during a day's hunt.

There's a wide variety of habitats in this little valley. Along the bottom are hemlock patches and near the creek tangles of laurel and rhododendron. On the side of the long hill are grapevines and more hemlock mingled in with the hardwoods. At the top are mast producing oaks that border a cultivated but uninhabited farm. Every deer I've been lucky enough to bring down has had corn in its stomach. An old stripmine, now growing back to nature, marks the end of the valley. Of all this terrain I prefer the hemlock bottom and one particular stand near the creek. In the eye of my mind the picture of deer hunting is a vision of the animals appearing ghost-like out of nowhere, quietly passing through a stand of hemlock. A big buck brings up the rear. It's snowing, the hemlocks are bent under the weight of the snow, and the gray forms are heading right past my stand. As Elbel is the place for all seasons, this is my dream for all times. It just becomes a little clearer when fall arrives.

### Winter

I don't visit Elbel as often after the coldness of winter sets in. There are many excuses, some valid, that prevent more frequent visits; too cold, too windy, too much snow, etc. But one winter weekend I ran out of excuses, so my son and I went there for a walk. We started out on the railroad bed but soon were hiking along the edges of the creek. Tracks of deer, grouse, a raccoon that had forded the stream via a fallen tree, and many red squirrels were all



**WITH EACH** walk or jog in the spring comes the day-to-day evidence of the new season. Flowers blooming, trees budding, insects singing, remind me of the warmer times ahead.

evident in the three inches of fresh snow. Coldness was soon forgotten and we covered the valley from end to end, adding our own tracks in a zigzag pattern. I showed him the spot that will be his stand on opening day when he's of age. He asked a thousand questions. The dull, cold lonesome sound of Elbel Creek rolling over rocks and logs made me burrow deeper into my parka. The beauty here in winter is of a stark and solemn nature, a gray-tinted backdrop to a black and white foreground. Away from the creek the stillness surrounded us; it was eerie. I was glad we had come, glad to have the company and the closeness of my son. I would come back soon.

### Spring

Halfway along the valley floor, and just to the side of the old railroad bed, is a fine cold spring that flows year round. Except when jogging I never fail to stop for a sip of water from its moss-covered cistern made of carefully placed rocks. Its icy waters taste wonderful every time of year but best, perhaps, when I am dragging out a deer. I've made it a custom to clean the debris away from the spring at this time of year, and to just spruce it up a bit. And, because the spring is near my stand, I combine a visit to both.

My spring visits have become a sort of ceremonial rite of the season, a walk or jog to celebrate the renewal of life, the relief of a warmer season. The noises and smells are different. They seem to express a new cycle beginning and an old one ending. It all carries over to my spirit, making me feel as fresh and new as the woods are becoming right before my eyes, nose and ears.

As an added bonus and further enticement in spring is the fact that for



the past few years Elbel Creek has harbored a few trout. Years ago mine run-off made the small run inhospitable. But now, due to cleaner water and, no doubt, some dedicated efforts, a few trout exist in the pools and deeper waters. I catch a few, and release all that I catch. On some days, though, I simply watch the fish. Snags and hard-to-reach holes which are sometimes lined on both sides with heavy laurel cover make fishing a chore, so it is as rewarding to toss a few worms into a hole and just watch a fish enjoy a hook-free meal. (That's what I was doing when I saw the bear.) The sun never feels as welcome as it does in the spring while I'm bashing at a pool.

With each walk or jog in the spring brings the day-to-day evidence of the new season. Flowers blooming, trees budding and insects singing remind me of the warmer times ahead.

### All Times

Everybody, I hope, who enjoys the outdoors has a favorite area such as mine, whether it's for hunting, fishing or to simply enjoy for its own sake, at every time of the year.







# The Monarch

By Paul A. Matthews

**J**UST 56 years ago, on the tenth day of June, I squinted down the barrel of my little Remington No. 4 Rolling Block and squeezed the trigger. We ate woodchuck for supper that night, woodchuck and gravey and dumplings, and were glad to get it.

Aside from putting a full meal on the table, that particular chuck marked one of the great milestones in my life. He taught me that life was a challenge, and that I could either meet that challenge or be swept away on a current of anonymity. On that day so long ago, in my own way, I crept from being a pampered child to one who made his own contribution toward the bread winning labors of the family, Ma and me.

I look back on that day now with an inner warmth, and with a hunger to just once more wrap my hand around that little Remington and go out across the fields with the dew-wet grass poking between my bare toes and nothing between my hide and the sun but a pair of badly faded bib overalls. I can still feel the balance of that rifle, and hear the metallic click as I eared the hammer back, and the comforting spat of that short fat slug from the little 32 rimfire. Yes, I can still feel and hear these things, still relive the memory of that first chuck.

He was a crafty old chuck. He lived in a burrow at the foot of a long dead chestnut. Often, all the way from our house, I could look up on Ike Young's sidehill and see the chuck standing at his burrow entrance, master of all he surveyed. Many times I tried to get him with my little 32; just as many times he outsmarted me. Until that fateful June day.

On that morning I headed out the door to do my daily stint of weeding the garden. Just as I stepped onto the wet grass, I unconsciously glanced at the sidehill and saw the old monarch

warming in the sun in front of the old chestnut. He'd taste good, I thought. A whole lot better than the corn meal mush we'd been eating. Besides, the weeds wouldn't grow that much in just one more day.

Without another thought I went back inside, picked up the little Remington and a single cartridge from the box that was less than half full. No use taking a second. If the first one didn't do the job, Br'er Chuck wouldn't stand for a second.

Back outside I squinted into the early morning sun, scanning the hillside for the old chuck. Yep, he was still there, off to one side of his hole, nibbling on the wet grass that held a few fragile stems of clover. I thumbed the cartridge into the chamber, flipped the breech shut and let the hammer down on half cock. Then I headed across the yard toward Mallory Run.

## Crafty Marmot

I had tried for this crafty marmot before. His eyes were telescopic, though, and his brain worked with computer precision. There was no way I could walk across the fields to get a shot at him, nor could I even walk along the dirt road that bordered Mallory Run without him anticipating my intentions. Nope, this chuck was smart. I figured I'd have to walk out of sight, along the bottom of the creek bed, until the creek entered the woods. Then I could leave the creek, climb well up on the Buckhorn, and then get behind and above him. Even at that, I'd have a lot of bare ground to cover before getting within range.

In the creek bed I hurried, jumping from flat stone to boulder to sand spit with a precision gained by past experiences and more than a few stubbed toes. Up past the First Gate I went, past the Frog's Place, and then past

the Second Gate where Mallory Run veered away from the road, making a wedge-shape pasture. There a half dozen sorry looking milk cows chewed their cuds in total disinterest as I made my way past them toward the fringe of woods.

Once I'd gained the protection of the woods, I left the creek bed and headed uphill in a line that I figured would put me at the peak of Ike Young's side-hill. The going was rough and steep, and more than once I swallowed my Adam's apple when a grouse boiled out from underfoot. I watched them longingly, wondering what it would be like to own a real, honest to gosh shotgun and to actually shoot at grouse with at least a remote chance of getting one. I made a mental note to again check the Sears Roebuck catalog that night. Maybe, just maybe . . .



I was above Ike Young's sidehill now, pushing daydream fantasies of shotguns to the dark recesses of my mind. I started easing my way downhill toward the edge of the field where a massive white oak grew.

The oak was much too far away to provide a blind, but peeping from behind it and peering downhill at the old chestnut, I was surprised to see there was a slight rise between the oak and chestnut. There was no way I could see whether or not the old chuck was still

outside his burrow. Conversely, if I got down on my belly and crawled, there was no way he was going to see me until I was well within range.

In my naive mind it was a simple, uncomplicated operation with no foreseeable interference. And with a grin that advertised two rows of widely spaced teeth, and a heart that was skipping rope along my rib cage, I bellied down in the grass and started my stalk. None of the great frontiersmen ever used greater caution. If Lew Wetzel or D. Boone had been with me, I'm certain they would have marveled at the expertise with which I wiggled past thistles and briars toward my quarry. For though I knew it was only a wood-chuck, my imagination worked overtime with visions of rhino and buffalo, and the Indians who had lived here just 200 years before.

I was approaching the high spot now. Another few yards of crawling and I'd be able to see the old chuck. I dug my elbows and toes in the dirt, pushing the little rifle ahead of me until I came up behind a clump of weeds. There, slowly, ever so slowly, I raised my head.

**I CAN still feel the balance of that rifle, hear the metallic click as I eased the hammer back, and remember the comforting spat of that short fat slug from the little 32 rimfire.**

Nothing. Not even a chippy bird.

My eyes soaked in everything below me: the dead chestnut tree; the old half-barrel, fed with water from a two-inch galvanized pipe, leading from a spring uphill; every clump of weeds and briars that could hide a chuck; even the bare ground where I figured he might blend in with the surroundings.

Nothing. He was gone.

Then it dawned on me that he was probably on the downhill side of the old chestnut, standing on the front porch of his burrow, soaking up the sun. If I was careful, I might be able to



crawl to a position behind the chestnut. No, that was a bad idea. Better to stay right where I was and wait until he comes into view again.

I settled in. The sun rose higher, a polished brass ball radiating streamers of heat that raised small globules of sweat along my forearms. Tiny sweat bees congregated around me, and when I went to shoo them away, one got caught in the crook of my arm and voiced his objections with a barbed harpoon. It raised a small white welt.

Then the deer flies came, buzzing around my head like miniature planes in a dogfight and then zooming in for a landing on some unprotected spot where they would sink their drill bits into my hide to suck up the blood.

Still no chuck. It was as though he knew I was out there waiting, and he purposely subjected me to all the local miseries and tortures. Ants began to crawl inside my bibbed overalls, tracking their way in whispered footsteps along my sides and back until my whole body fairly crawled. I wiggled

and scratched and, in return, felt the white-hot nips of their fiery tongues. Never before had I realized just how much life really existed on this apparently empty place we called Ike Young's sidehill.

### **In His Burrow**

In a moment of lull, I studied my surroundings again. Had I been at the house, I know I could have looked up and seen the old chuck at any one of a dozen places. He'd been around for years, wily and crafty and almost disdainful of the human race. But now he knew I was here and he stayed within the protection of his burrow.

"Paul!"

The shout came from the house, and a third of a mile away I could see Ma in the back yard lifting her voice to all outdoors.

"Paul!"

It was an unforgiving sin not to answer. I started to raise up when a spot of brown caught my eye. It was the chuck. I flattened myself against the

## **GAMEcooking Tips**

### **Peking Pheasant**

For those who enjoy ethnic foods, wild game is an excellent resource. We especially enjoy Oriental dishes made with venison or fowl. This one is a good way to use any scraps or small amounts of fowl you may still have in the freezer. Instead of whole breasts, slice odd parts of fowl into uniform pieces and cut down on the cooking time. Do not overcook the fowl for this dish; it must be reheated. It's fine to leave it a little pink in the center when you saute. Combine squab or quail with pheasant to make this excellent Chinese dish.

- 4 to 6 pheasant breasts, cleaned
- 1 5-ounce bottle soy sauce
- 1 garlic clove, crushed

- 1½ cups chopped Chinese cabbage
- 1 pound mushrooms, cleaned and sliced
- ½ cup slivered almonds
- 4 ounces butter or margarine
- ⅓ cup toasted, slivered almonds

In a large bowl or sealable bag, marinate the breasts in the soy sauce and garlic for 4 to 6 hours. Melt butter in large frying pan or wok. Sauté two minutes. Cover and steam 2 minutes. Add mushrooms and stir another two minutes. Return breasts to wok and reheat 2 to 3 minutes. Serve on heated platter with vegetables in the center and breasts around the edge. Garnish with almonds. Serves 4.

—FROM WILD GAME COOKERY  
BY CAROL VANCE WARY



I SETTLED in. The sun rose higher, a polished brass ball radiating streamers of heat that raised small globules of sweat along my forearms. Tiny sweat bees congregated around me and then the deer flies came.

ing a shot at where I thought the head would be. But I knew even at that age, to never, but never, touch off a shot until being positively certain of the target.

I waited and watched the chuck move farther from the old chestnut. The pounding in my chest got even more intense. It was beginning to pucker my eardrums and bulge my eyes from their sockets. I could feel little tremors in my hands.

Why didn't he stand up?

### Tremors to Shakes

The tremors increased to shakes that were so bad I could hardly keep my thumb on the hammer spur. I could barely grip the little rifle! Then he stood up. He wasn't much over 30 feet away, head stretched, surveying the valley below.

My hand shook uncontrollably as I eared the hammer back and raised the rifle to my shoulder. The muzzle spun in circles, figure eights and an assortment of other geometric figures, but somehow, at just the right time, just as the front sight passed across the chuck, I managed to yank the trigger. The little rifle fired with an angry spat.

The old monarch was gone.

Over the years the little rifle has gone to some other, long forgotten hand. Only the memory remains, memory of gravey and dumplings and a rather strong woodchuck, prepared by a mother whose face I can barely see over the abyss of time.

ground, no longer hearing the calls from the house nor feeling the ant bites or bee stings or deer flies. It was my chuck, and he was moving away from his burrow.

From nearly ground level I could just see the ridge of his back as he waddled away from the base of the old chestnut. I tracked him over the sights of the Remington, my thumb perched on the hammer, waiting for him to stop and stand up to check the surroundings. It would take only an instant.

I waited. Inside the bib of my overalls my heart started hammering. Thirty feet away I could see the line of brown hair above the top of the grass, and more than once I considered tak-

## Thoughts While Walking

*Skewered through and through with office pens, and bound hand and foot with red tape.*

— Charles Dickens





Leonard Lee Rue

**ALTHOUGH** the number of rabies cases in Pennsylvania declined last year, the area affected has grown and probably will continue to do so this year. Raccoons are still the predominant species affected, and they are followed by skunks, bats and foxes.

## Rabies—More or Less

By Larry Iampietro

**T**HE NUMBER of known rabies cases in Pennsylvania decreased from the high of 583 in 1986 to 325 in 1987. The area affected by the rabies virus, however, has, as predicted, grown since 1986 and will continue to do so in 1988. Counties north and east of the previous hot spots in southcentral Pennsylvania are seeing the most cases. Counties with the highest incidence last year were Dauphin, Lebanon and Chester. Raccoons are still the predominant species affected. They are followed by skunks, bats and foxes. There also has been a decline in the number of cats and dogs known to be infected.

Several reasons probably account for these decreases. There may actually be less animals carrying the rabies virus; or more people are avoiding suspect animals. Our system of testing depends on people submitting suspect animals which they have been exposed to. Exposures seem to be down from other years, possibly because more people are aware of the

rabies problem. Articles like this have unquestionably helped. A concerted effort has been made to raise public awareness without causing fear of enjoying outdoor activities.

The decline of rabies in cats and dogs is largely due to the fact that most cats and dogs must, according to state law, be vaccinated against rabies. So-called "farm cats" are exempt. As evident on the accompanying table, cats are still a contributing factor to our rabies problem, largely because of this exemption. The wisest thing for every pet owner to do is to be sure all cats and dogs are vaccinated. That's the only way to fully protect pets and families, not only from rabies, but also from some hefty fines and lawsuits should a cat or dog bite someone.

In addition to pet vaccination, avoiding suspect animals, especially raccoons, foxes, skunks, bats, and stray cats and dogs is important. If these animals must be handled, wear protective clothing

# ANIMAL RABIES BY COUNTIES AND SPECIES FOR 1987

|                | BAT | BOBCAT | CAT | COW | DOG | FOX | WOODCHUCK | RACCOON | SKUNK | TOTAL |
|----------------|-----|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----------|---------|-------|-------|
| Adams          |     |        |     |     |     | 1   |           | 3       | 1     | 5     |
| Bedford        |     |        | 1   |     |     |     |           | 4       |       | 5     |
| Berks          | 2   |        |     |     |     |     |           | 2       | 1     | 5     |
| Blair          | 1   |        |     |     |     |     |           | 8       | 2     | 11    |
| Bucks          | 1   |        |     |     |     |     |           |         |       | 1     |
| Cambria        |     |        |     |     | 1   | 1   |           | 11      | 1     | 14    |
| Centre         | 1   |        |     |     |     |     |           | 8       |       | 9     |
| Chester        | 1   |        | 1   |     | 1   |     |           | 30      | 3     | 36    |
| Clinton        |     |        |     |     |     |     |           | 1       |       | 1     |
| Columbia       | 1   |        |     |     |     |     |           |         |       | 1     |
| Cumberland     | 2   |        | 1   |     |     | 1   |           | 4       | 5     | 13    |
| Dauphin        |     | 1      |     | 1   |     | 2   | 3         | 73      | 6     | 86    |
| Franklin       |     |        |     |     |     | 1   |           | 4       | 1     | 6     |
| Fulton         |     |        |     |     |     |     |           |         | 1     | 1     |
| Huntingdon     | 1   |        |     |     |     |     |           | 2       |       | 3     |
| Juniata        | 1   |        |     |     |     |     |           | 3       | 1     | 5     |
| Lackawanna     | 1   |        |     |     |     |     |           |         |       | 1     |
| Lancaster      |     |        | 1   |     |     |     |           | 14      | 4     | 19    |
| Lebanon        |     |        | 2   |     |     | 2   |           | 34      | 2     | 40    |
| Lycoming       | 1   |        |     |     |     |     |           | 1       |       | 2     |
| Mifflin        |     |        |     |     |     |     |           | 3       |       | 3     |
| Northampton    | 2   |        |     |     |     |     |           |         |       | 2     |
| Northumberland |     |        |     |     |     |     |           | 1       |       | 1     |
| Perry          | 1   |        |     |     |     |     |           | 8       | 6     | 15    |
| Schuylkill     |     |        |     |     |     |     |           | 3       |       | 3     |
| Snyder         |     |        | 1   |     |     |     |           | 4       | 3     | 8     |
| Somerset       |     |        |     |     |     |     |           | 3       | 1     | 4     |
| Union          |     |        |     |     |     |     |           | 3       | 2     | 5     |
| York           |     |        | 2   |     |     | 3   |           | 13      |       | 20    |
| TOTALS         | 16  | 1      | 9   | 1   | 2   | 11  | 5         | 240     | 40    | 325   |



(gloves, etc.). In the spring the temptation to handle litters of young animals is great, but don't! Leave them alone. If you are bitten or scratched, the only way of determining if the wild animal has rabies is to have it tested. And, because brain material must be used, it must be killed. Rarely are young animals abandoned. Chances are the mother is not far away, waiting for you to leave.

While Pennsylvanians have been doing a great job adhering to these precautions (pet vaccination and avoidance of suspect animals) the state, through Wistar Institute in Philadelphia, is proceeding with a program to vaccinate raccoons. This will be done using a newly developed vaccine. Researchers plan on putting the vaccine in special baits and then broadcasting the baits over an area. In theory, if a significant number of raccoons eat the bait and, in effect, vaccinate themselves, the disease can be brought under control. Pending federal approval, the whole procedure will first be tried on an isolated island off the Atlantic Coast. If results are favorable, the procedure may then be applied to selected areas in the state to lessen the spread of rabies in wildlife.

## What to do if Exposed

If you are exposed to a suspect animal, by means of a bite or scratch, or if the animal's saliva somehow enters the mucous membranes of your eyes or nose or an open cut, you have two alternatives. If the exposure was from a cat or dog, the animal can be quarantined for ten days. That's possible because cats and dogs can not survive longer than a few days after the rabies virus has reached their saliva glands. If the animal survives the ten-day period, the saliva could not have contained the rabies virus.

If the cat or dog was vaccinated, its veterinarian should be contacted to verify that a vaccine was given and that the animal is still covered. If the cat or dog dies before the end of the quarantine period, or if the exposure was due to any other species of suspect animal, the animal should be tested. Animals other than cats and dogs can survive much longer after the virus has reached their saliva glands.

Your first action after a bite or scratch from a suspect animal should be to wash the wound and apply some type of antiseptic, alcohol, for example. In addition to rabies, tetanus and many other diseases

could possibly be carried in the mouth and on the claws of animals. The dead animal must then be delivered to a submitting agency. Do not damage the brain. The animal should be wrapped in a plastic bag and covered with ice or ice packs. Do not freeze. A submitting agency would be a veterinarian, physician, wildlife officer, animal control officer, county humane society, county health department, or one of the eight regional offices of the Department of Agriculture. If you have a justifiable reason for an animal being tested, it will be sent to one of four laboratories in the state. There is no charge for testing under these circumstances.

The laboratories doing the testing are:

For Human Exposure Specimens Only

1. Pa. Dept. of Health,  
Bureau of Laboratories,  
Lionville, PA 215 (363-8500)
2. Philadelphia Dept. of Health  
215 (875-5917) For specimens in  
the city of Philadelphia only.
3. Allegheny County Dept.  
of Laboratories, 412 (578-8070)  
For specimens in the southwest  
region of the state.

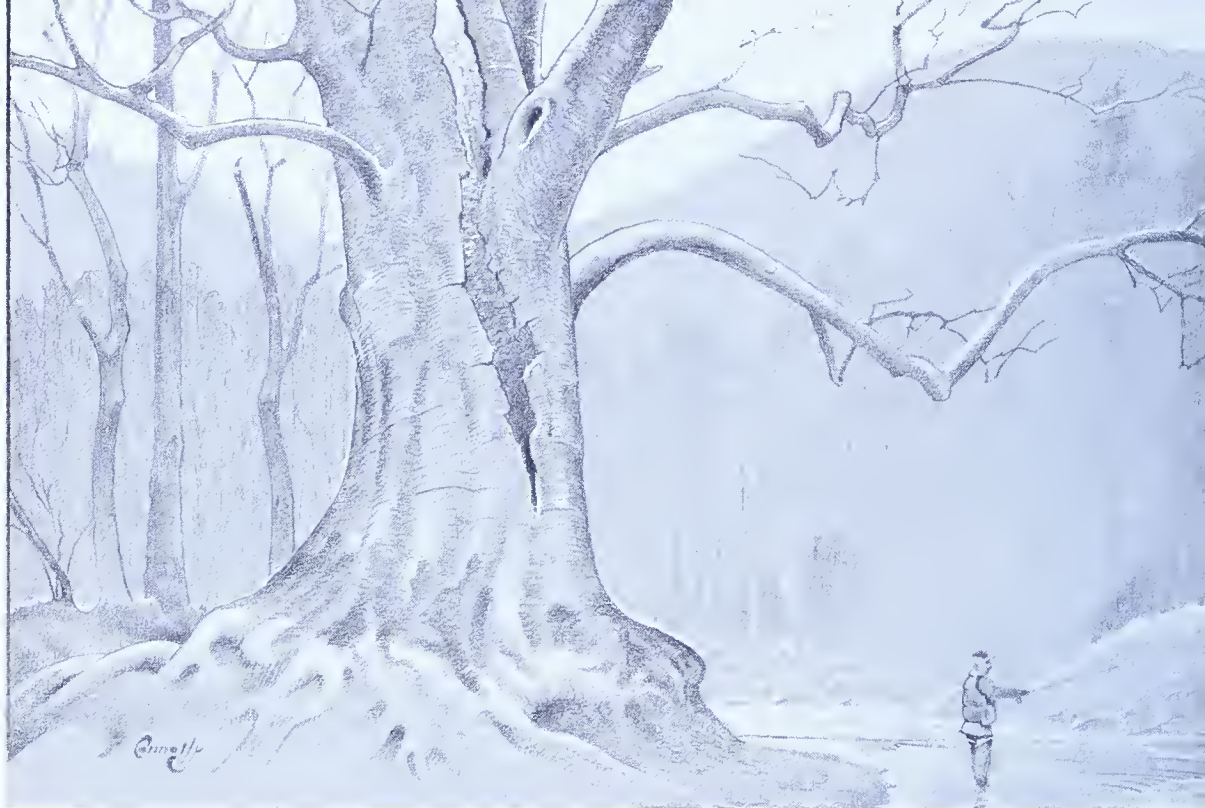
For All Other Exposures, such as to your cat, dog, farm animals.

Pa. Dept. of Agriculture, Bureau of  
Animal Industry 717 (787-8808) Sum-  
merdale, Pa.

If you can't contact any of the submitting agencies, or any of the above laboratories, (as might happen after hours or weekends and holidays) call the Health Department emergency number, 717-737-5349, for answers to any questions.

Results are usually given within 24 hours after arrival of the specimen at the laboratory. Fortunately, rabies is a slow process. The length of time it takes the virus to reach the brain from a wound site varies from weeks to years. That gives you plenty of time to have an animal tested or quarantined and then, if necessary, receive treatment. Treatment is 100 percent effective. It consists of one dose of Rabies Immune Globulin, a preparation made from antibodies taken from the blood of humans immunized against rabies, and five doses of human diploid-cell vaccine, given over a four-week period.

With public education, vaccination of pets and possibly wildlife vaccination, too, the number of rabies cases will likely continue to decline.



**PERHAPS** the gnarled twisted trunk, misshapen by years of winter winds, held no interest for the timbermen who had taken the rest of the forest. Maybe the blackened scar had ruined its monetary value.

# The Beech

**By Marion Younkin**

**T**HE OLD BEECH tree stood like a sentinel on Mount Davis for as long as I could remember. The venerable patriarch surveyed the surrounding hardwood forests and ruled its domain from atop the bank above the spring that fed Isers Run. The stumps in the vicinity testified that the old beech had survived at least two logging operations. Perhaps the gnarled twisted trunk, misshapen by years of winter winds, held no interest for the timbermen who had taken the rest of the forest. Maybe the blackened scar running about two thirds of its length, sign of lightning from a passing summer thunderstorm, had ruined its monetary value. For whatever reason, the old beech was one of the oldest living landmarks on Mount Davis.

My father and grandfather taught me to know the mountain long before

I was old enough to hunt. Hikes with them along forest paths left me with valuable training on game identification and woodcraft. After the slow emergence of spring, fishing trips along Isers Run filled summer afternoons, and tagging along on Dad's fall squirrel hunts filled the time between school days.

As a young lad, I remember starting many October mornings at the Caselman River and ending at "The Beech." Usually, a couple of gray squirrels were dangling from my belt by the time I made the four-mile hike up to the tree. Stretching out beneath the rather sparse branches, I would let the beech's creaking old bones gently rock me to sleep while I waited for Dad to join me. A few fox squirrels lived on or near the beech for several years, yet I shot only one. They were my afternoon



theater company. Zipping up the trunk and doing aerial acrobatics, the fox squirrels provided hours of amusement as they fussed and fidgeted their way toward winter. Chipmunks, chickadees, jays, and a flock of crows shared the tree's winter offerings with the fox squirrels. Possums and raccoons took refuge in the branches, and deer crowded around the trunk in hopes of finding a few missed nuts. The spring beneath the old beech was a favorite watering hole for all of the mountain's wildlife. Game trails crisscrossed the area, and on any given day you could see any given game animal in Pennsylvania.

In the spring, grouse would nest in the thicket next to the cold spring. One sunny April day, while trying to coax a stubborn brook trout out from under a limb, I saw a female grouse herd eight chicks up the bank toward the beech. That same spring, on another forray for trout, I heard my first wild turkey. The quiet spring woodland reverberated with the "gooble-wobble-wobble" of a strutting tom, but I never got a glimpse of him. Crows regularly nested in the tree, and I've often wondered if that loud tom was warning the crows from his territory. Spring also brought the raccoon to the beech to feed and give birth. The tracks along the bank revealed that mother raccoon would bring her young to the spring to feed at night and back by dawn. The beech was a home and a refuge for all wild things.

Late in the summer of '65, while hiking in the area, I spotted an 8-point buck in velvet, feeding on acorns. I figured come December my dad would be helping me drag home a couple pounds of venison steak, not to mention roasts, sausage and a fine trophy for the wall. I dreamed of bagging that buck all summer but I never went back to the tree until small game season. I didn't want to spook that buck.

Opening day of deer season found me tight against the trunk, scanning the hillside for *my* buck. Crows scolded me from the treetops at daybreak, but I



stoically ignored them and continued to peer into the slowly brightening gloom. About 7:30, sounds of trampling leaves preceded the arrival of three does. Trailing behind, a plump 4-point tiptoed along. My trigger finger itched like crazy, but I deep-breathed my nerves back to a fairly normal level and gritted my teeth. I passed up the easy shot; it wasn't my buck. At 10:15, eleven doe trooped past, and a nearly frozen 16-year-old told himself, just one more hour. At 2:00 I decided to move before I grew roots and began working slowly down Isers Run. Five more doe crossed my path by the time I'd given up and started for home. I never did see a hair nor a ghost of a track to suggest that *my* buck had visited the mountain. Cold and disappointed, I came home and threw my hunting clothes in the basement. My dad, knowing a little of how I felt, just patted my shoulder and said, "The whole trick to scoutin' deer is to find'em as many times as you can, without lettin' 'em know they've been found." I settled for a doe that year.

#### Four Years Later

Four years later I was walking to the beech when I stumbled across a hen grouse sitting on a nest of ten eggs. Passing quietly by, not to disturb her, I went on my way, chuckling to myself. Not 50 yards away another hen appeared ahead of me. She limped along before bursting into the air. I puzzled over her strange behavior before it dawned on me that another nest must be in the area. Peering into the thicket beside the beech, I discovered seven

eggs and a broken shell in a shallow nest under a thorn tree. Backing off, I retreated, thinking I had just found a thunderbird bonanza. Not wishing to make another mistake, I kept a discreet eye on those birds all summer. When they moved, I knew where they went. When one of the chicks died, I was aware of it. When small game season opened, I was ready. My father, my brother and I started up the run and spread out along the hillside. The first bird of the day fell to dad's 16-gauge Ithaca when four birds flushed two at a time. Fifteen birds took wing that day and I spent 15 shells. I got one grouse. My dad dubbed me "Kid Curry" (between bellows of laughter) and claimed it was the worst exhibition of wing-shooting he had ever seen. My, did I have fun!

College, marriage, and a thousand other things kept me from that area for a long time. My hunting forays took me to other parts of Pennsylvania and other responsibilities kept me away from Isers Run and Mount Davis. Fall

1984 was my first opportunity in some time to spend a part of small game season on Mt. Davis and I was looking forward to a reunion with the beech. The mountain seemed like an old friend that has been on a long vacation — familiar yet distant and strange.

Everything changes in this world, and nothing quite so drastically, if not subtly, as nature. What I remembered as a towering grove of oak had been replaced by maple, wild cherry and birch. There seemed to be a lot more roads in the area, but local hunting clubs had managed to keep the essential wild areas intact. As I walked the banks of Isers Run, newly covered with the rust and gold of fallen leaves, squirrel skittered away through the maples. Most of the landmarks I knew as a youngster had been overgrown, and the mountain had gotten a little steeper. Grouse flushed from the grapevines that had grown up along the banks, but I was so anxious to reach the beech that I never even shouldered my scattergun. Gray squirrel aplenty

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GROUSE flushed from the grapevines that had grown up along the banks, but I was so anxious to reach the beach that I never even shouldered my scattergun.

scampered away from me, but I did not see one fox squirrel.

As I gazed ahead to the spring I remembered so well, I noticed that the skyline had changed. No towering branches swayed on the slight breeze; no sharp lines of bark reached for the clouds. Nothing lasts forever, but I was shocked to see the beech lying in ruin on the bank above the spring. Gray branches like old bones lay in the fern and brush. The broken skeleton had been lying there for several years. Briars had grown up through the branches, goldenrod lay drying along the length of the shattered trunk. No longer would the aerial acrobatics of the fox squirrel brighten an afternoon of October sunshine, nor would the raccoon nest in the hollow trunk. The



grouse had moved to the grapevines downstream and the deer would cross Isers Run below the spring.

My mind still was trying to refute the evidence before me. Time had at last conquered the patriarch, just as someday it will conquer me.

## *Books in Brief...*

(Order from publisher, not from Game Commission)

**Outbound Journeys in Pennsylvania**, by Marcia Bonta, Pennsylvania State University Press, 215 Wagner Bldg., University Park, PA 16802, 176 pp., paperback, \$12.75, cloth, \$22.50. A guide to 55 natural areas that offer outstanding family recreation opportunities. Many accounts originally appeared in *Pennsylvania Wildlife and Outdoor Digest*. Each account includes a description of the area, plants and animals that can be found, clear directions for finding it, and other pertinent details to make visits enjoyable. Pennsylvania has a wealth of scenic, interesting and unusual places that appeal to outdoorsmen. This guide will help you find 55 of them.

**Guide to the Mammals of Pennsylvania**, by Joseph F. Merritt, University of Pittsburgh Press, 127 N. Bellefield Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15260, 408 pp., \$34.95, hardcover, \$14.95, paper (add \$2 postage). This is the most up-to-date, comprehensive and authoritative guide to the state's mammals. From opossums, shrews and moles to foxes, bobcat and deer, 63 species in all are covered. Each species account includes a photograph, detailed description, natural history and behavior information, state and continental range maps, and a table summarizing the animal's length, weight, population density, home range and longevity. This is an excellent volume for outdoorsmen, students and all others interested in Pennsylvania's mammals.

**Rubber Legs and White Tail-Hairs**, by Patrick F. McManus, Henry Holt and Co., Inc., 521 Fifth Ave., NYC 10175, 198 pp., \$14.95. Everybody who's made it to the last page of *Outdoor Life*—and those who start there—is familiar with McManus, considered by many to be today's finest outdoor humorist. Here are 27 of his essays on hunting, fishing, camping and childhood recollections, involving characters we all can relate to. As dedicated McManus fans know, he's sure to bring laughs and rekindled memories.

One Man's Success With The . . .

# Conservation Reserve Program

By Paul Shaffer

Photos by the Author

**B**OTH WILDLIFE and landowner Dave Brown are benefiting from the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), a federal plan designed to reduce soil erosion, provide wildlife habitat, and improve farm economics. Dave planned on eventually developing wildlife habitat since he acquired his 160-acre Tioga County farm. It was the CRP, however, of the Food Security Act of 1985, commonly known as the Farm Bill, that enabled Dave to develop and enhance his property more quickly than he ever anticipated.

Dave enrolled 40 acres of highly erodible cropland in the CRP program. According to the requirements of the act, Dave agreed to stop commercially cultivating the enrolled land and, instead, develop more permanent cover on it. He planted trees, shrubs, grasses and legumes on most of this land. He also annually plants on several acres a mixture of millet, wheat and corn for wildlife. In addition, because water wasn't very plentiful on Dave's property, he constructed a shallow water storage area.

Under CRP Dave receives annual rental payments for ten years, from the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, for the 40 acres he's no longer devoting to commercial crops. Also under CRP Dave received technical assistance and a one-time cost share from the Soil Conservation Service to help cover the expenses for the shallow water area and for the permanent cover plantings.

"Seeing wildlife respond to the practices we were able to employ through CRP is most satisfying," reports Dave. "Canada geese rest on the shallow water area and feed in the nearby grain plots during their migrations. And, although wild turkeys used to occasionally be seen on my farm, soon after we developed the permanent cover, a small flock took up residence in the area, and last spring six hens nested and raised their young in the newly created habitat."

To get full enjoyment of the wildlife he's helping, Dave constructed several observation blinds in his fencerows. "I get quite a thrill watching wild animals undisturbed in their natural environments," says Dave.

Dave has found the CRP to be an answer to his dreams. "CRP is letting me develop wildlife habitat much sooner than I had ever thought possible. Both the annual payments and the one-time cost share are helping to



**DAVE PLANTED** trees, shrubs, grasses and legumes on most of his enrolled land. He also annually plants a mixture of millet, wheat and corn for wildlife.



IN ADDITION to establishing permanent cover on his highly erodible land, below, Dave, with technical and financial assistance from SCS, constructed a shallow water storage area, right.



cover the costs, which run between \$100 and \$150 per acre," figures Dave.

The purpose of the CRP is to enable farmers to refrain from cultivating highly erodible areas without suffering major economic hardships. The more permanent cover planted on enrolled areas protects the fragile soils from winds and rains, and turns them into havens for wildlife. It's hoped that, nationwide, 40 million acres of such land will be taken out of production by 1990. If that's attained, soil erosion will be reduced by 764 million tons a year. Pennsylvania's goal for the program is 84,000 acres. Emphasis is being placed on enrolling those lands that produce runoff that eventually reaches the Chesapeake Bay, but landowners statewide are encouraged to evaluate this program.

Additional information on CRP and

other conservation provisions of the Food Security Act are available from the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service and from the Soil Conservation Service. For additional assistance, the Pennsylvania Game Commission provides tree and shrub seedlings to landowners enrolled in one of the agency's public access programs.

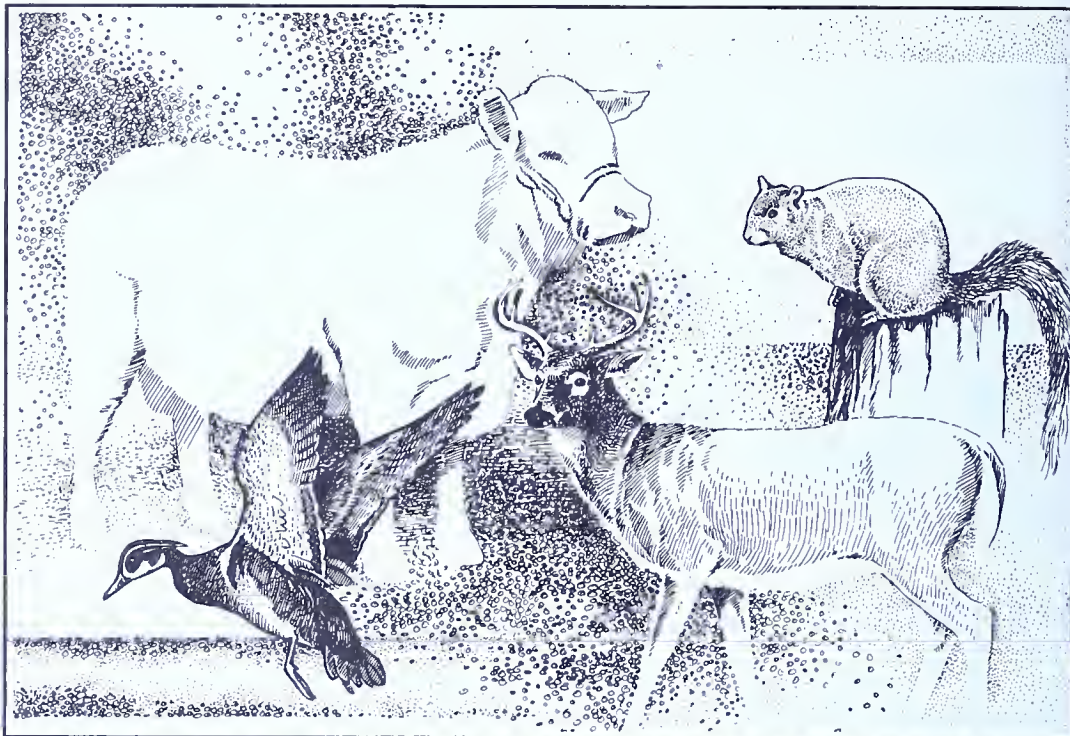
The CRP holds great potential for alleviating many of our most pressing agricultural and environmental problems, including soil erosion and declining numbers of farmland wildlife. Dave Brown's success is not unique; many others are reaping similar benefits. If you're a landowner, look and see what the CRP can do for you.

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Paul Shaffer is the District Conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service in Wellsboro.

### Cover Painting by Dennis Burkhardt

The red fox is found throughout the state, particularly in agricultural areas and brushy forests. According to "Guide to the Mammals of Pennsylvania," University of Pittsburgh Press, no red fox remains have been found in any excavations of pre-Columbian Indian villages here, yet gray fox remains are quite common. It's been theorized, therefore, that red foxes in Pennsylvania descended from European red foxes released in Colonial times for sport hunting. Other researchers feel red foxes moved in from the North, after forests were cleared, when the habitat became more suitable for them.



**CARDIOLOGISTS** who have studied foods have learned that wild meat is much lower in cholesterol than most domestic meats, especially marbled beef. But there's more to game meat than low cholesterol levels . . .

## Beating Cholesterol the Wild Way

**By Sam Fadala**

**M**AN DOES NOT live by bread alone. He also eats meat. By preference and biological design, man is a meateater. No group of people that ever existed on this planet has been vegetarians. Man thrives on a varied diet of meat as well as vegetables, fruits and grains. Some groups, such as the Inuit, have long survived on diets mainly of meat and fish. Our digestive systems are engineered to digest meat. Recent studies have shown that many other primates are meat lovers, too, even when their diet is comprised mostly of vegetable matter. The chimpanzee, for example, often hunts in groups for small animals, later sharing the catch among members of the tribe, especially nonhunting female chimps. Monkeys eat meat, too. Baboons prefer it. Their

food choices run first to animal protein, then roots and fruits, and finally grasses and leaves, the latter by necessity, not choice.

But some Hindus, you say, are true and strict vegetarians. A few are, but many people of India believe it is alright to consume certain meats, as long as one was not involved in the killing of the animal which provides it. A Brahman, for example, I met at a university often ate lamb. Furthermore, it was learned that Hindus who immigrated to England often fell ill with pernicious anemia and other serious health problems. A study revealed the reason: the vegetables consumed in India were replete with tiny insects, while the vegetables of England, subjected to insecticides, were not. Therefore, Indian

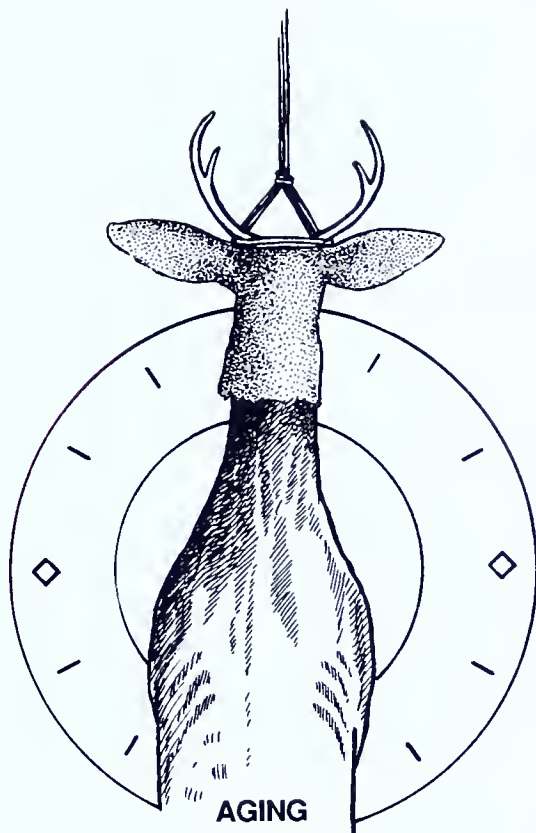


**AGING MEANS** hanging the carcass in a clean area at about 40°F. I do not normally recommend aging deer, however, as freezing is usually sufficient to tenderize venison.

vegetables were protein enriched, while English vegetables were protein poor. Our own Pilgrims and pioneers were meat eaters by choice. They brought a good many domestic animals with them, but found that they did not need to kill these beasts because the country was well stocked with wild meat. The newcomers saved their livestock for breeding and dairy purposes, while consuming the game which abounded in almost every region.

The era of harvesting all our meat from the wilds passed when cities, highways, and busy factories blossomed on the countryside. Domestic meat took the place of wild meat. Domestic meat is delicious. Beef is most popular. The best grades of beef are marbled, that is, fattened so the meat is succulent and full of flavor. Then a word began to crop up daily. It was an old word, but one that gained a new meaning. Cholesterol. Actually, cholesterol, a fatty crystalline alcohol, has always been a natural and vital element of man's makeup. But one might say there is "good cholesterol" and "bad cholesterol," and our rich eating habits were often providing too much of the latter. This cholesterol clings to the inner walls of blood vessels, constricting the flow of blood. So serious is the problem that the operation known as the "bypass" has become a household term. Arteries, and sometimes veins, clogged with "bad cholesterol" have been bypassed with surgically incorporated vessels taking their place in the cardiovascular system.

"Lower your blood cholesterol," has become a common warning. Eat more fiber, we're told. True, fiber is good food for the human system. However, our digestive tracts were never meant to handle much fiber. In fact, quite the opposite is true—the human digestive system can manage only a small



amount of fiber. Man's digestive system is too short. We need dense, high quality food for our rapid (about 25-hour) digestive cycle. That's meat. Meat, including fish, contains the essential combinations of fats, vitamins, minerals and amino acids for human digestion and bodily welfare. And if you want meat low in cholesterol, consider the wild alternative. Few hunters are able to harvest enough meat to provide their year round meat needs. Every hunter, however, can use wild meat as an important dietary supplement.

There are 20 million hunters in America today. A census showed that the majority considered the use of the harvested meat as the most advantageous aspect of the sport. Rabbits and squirrels occupy one end of the wild meat spectrum, with deer, elk, and other large game animals on the other. In between are the upland birds, ducks, and geese. "You're going to have to reduce your red meat intake," a friend was warned following bypass surgery. "Unless you can get a supply of game meat," the surgeon added. Car-



diologists who have studied foods have learned that wild meat is much lower in cholesterol than most domestic meats, especially marbled beef. But there's more to game meat than low cholesterol levels.

Beef contains 12 times as much fat as moose meat, 23 times as much as caribou. Venison and antelope meats offer similar comparisons. One test revealed 14.7 grams of fat in a 3.3-ounce beef T-bone steak. A 3.5-ounce venison steak, in the same study, contained 6.4 grams of fat, less than half as much. Generally, wild meat has less sodium than domestic, too. Some wild game meat has over 30 percent more protein than beef. It's not that game meat is fatless, it's just that the fat is concentrated, often in the upper shoulder region and along the back, rather than marbled throughout the carcass. The fat can be removed easily. Fat is an important source of vitamins, and the consumer who does not have an overt cholesterol problem may wish to add a modest amount of beef fat for its familiar flavor, especially when he makes his own gameburger meat. Game meat generally has more calcium, iron, phosphorus, more Vitamin A, Thiamin, Riboflavin and Niacin than beef, too.

But if a person doesn't *like* game meat, what good are all these positive aspects? Few meat eaters dislike game, providing it's cared for properly. Drag a beef carcass in the dust, hang it in the sun, let it "ripen" for a few days, age it improperly and then cook it improperly and the most potentially succulent

piece of Kobi beef will repel anyone. Beef and other domestic meats are delicious, and most of us will continue to enjoy such meat. Game meat, however, can be a delicious addition to the menu. There are four secrets to fine tasting game meat: field care, aging, packaging and cooking.

As a hunter of 30 years and author of a successful game care book (*The Complete Guide to Game Care & Cookery*) let me convince you to strip the hide from a game animal soon after it has been dispatched. Cool the meat quickly. Keep it cool. Keep it clean. If in a warm climate, hang the carcass by night, but insulate it, with sleeping bags, for example, by day. Wrap the meat in clean game bags to keep it fly free and safe from dust or dirt. Watch out for "aging." Much aging is a misnomer. It should be called "rotting." Aging means hanging the carcass in a clean area at about 40°F. Aging is not necessary for all meat, nor desirable. Antelope, for example, requires no aging. I do not normally recommend aging of most deer carcasses either. Freezing is normally sufficient to tenderize it. Moose, elk and other large quadrupeds can be aged for a modest time period at 40° for promotion of tenderness.

If you do your own butchering or wrapping, wrap each package first with clear plastic, and then with an outer layer of standard freezer paper. So wrapped, freezer burn is less likely and the meat will retain its flavor for a long period of time. For gameburger, spice lightly *before* grinding the meat. Add about 10 percent beef fat—fresh, of course—to the cubes of game meat, dust with pepper, splash a bit of Worcestershire sauce over it, along with the same modest splash of soy sauce, and then mix and grind. Package burger as above. Cooked over a gas grill, such lean gameburger meat is delicious and good for your health.

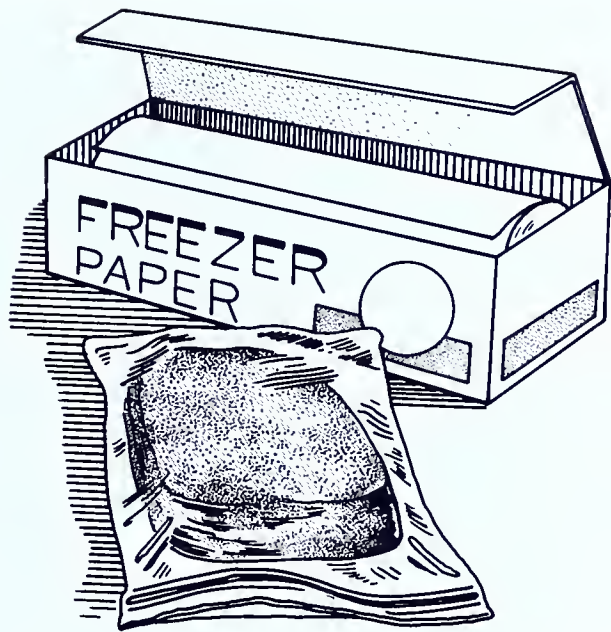
Forget the au naturel approach to game cooking. Most of us don't eat game on a regular basis. Therefore, it's not as familiar to the palate as domes-



**WRAP** each package first with clear plastic and then with an outer layer of standard freezer paper. So wrapped, freezer burn is less likely and the meat will retain its flavor for a long time.

tic meats. While my family loves a medium rare venison steak, simply sprinkled with garlic powder and fast-grilled, not everybody does. Find and use good recipes. They aren't hard to find. There are probably enough game meat recipes in the local library to stretch from coast to coast. And don't be hesitant about modifying a recipe to fit the tastes of you and your family. After a little experimentation you'll develop your own recipe file, especially for those excellent standard meat dishes such as grilled gameburgers, fried rabbit, stewed squirrel, venison steak, duck soup and so forth. "But you've disguised the natural flavor of the meat," some gourmand may complain. Perhaps you have, but it's better to have your eaters enjoying these important wild alternatives with special cooking, rather than leaving the au natural meals on their plates. Don't be afraid to use marinades and spices.

Food prejudice, along with bad field handling and unimaginative cooking,



has caused the waste of much good game meat. We all harbor food prejudices of one sort or another. But we can learn to overcome most, if not all, of these unfounded dislikes. I doubt that I will ever get terribly excited over mopani worms, which I was offered in Africa. However, by recognizing that my dislike for them was totally a product of mind and not eating experience, I tried them. They weren't bad at all.

**ED GALLEW**, Bradford County Wildlife Conservation Officer, received the Outstanding Wildlife Officer of the Year Award from the Conservation Law Enforcement Chiefs Association. The award was presented during the 1988 Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference. Pictured with Ed are Bureau of Law Enforcement Director Dick Fagan, Executive Director Pete Duncan, and Northeast Region Supervisor Barry Warner.

Lantz A. Hoffman





THE FIRST "camp limit" occurred over a decade after the camp was formally established when Samuel Sleigh, Joe Fenton, Leonard Lamb, George Sleigh, Earl Fenton and Dorsey Burton, left to right, each dropped a buck.

# Remembering The First Fifty Years

By Samuel J. Sleigh

ON THE FIRST day of deer season in the fall of 1935, a group of soaking wet, ice cold, bone tired hunters were making their way back to their car after an unsuccessful hunt in the Pennsylvania State Forest near Black Moshannon Dam when they were invited to stop at the Old Stone Camp for coffee. The camp had been built by a group of Schnars men in 1922, but was then owned by a group of dentists, doctors, contractors and a Winchester salesman, all from Pittsburgh. It is reported that the Winchester man's wife was a national rifle champ. In any case, all were good shots as evidenced by a large pan of grouse killed late in small game season.

As the group soaked up the heat

from the fireplace, conversation drifted toward a camp. One member suggested they build one, then laughed. Another said, "Hey, that's not funny. We should." Another agreed, and soon everyone was buzzing with camp fever. They left Old Stone Camp warm and dry and promptly forgot about a camp of their own.

The second day the group gathered again, driving to the vicinity of Stone Camp early in the morning to begin the hunt.

Everyone wore his warmest clothing. Some had only work shoes, others rubber boots and wool socks—many full of holes. Some wore arctics over regular shoes. Andy always wore a pair of bib overalls. He was able to sit in a



**JOE FENTON**, left, dropped this hefty buck in the early '50s. Over the years, he and Leonard "Lamby" Lamb had the best records.

tree all day in the coldest of weather in just that light clothing. A few had warm Woolrich suits.

Some would stuff thermos bottles in their coats along with a sandwich or two, and thus were prepared to hunt from before daylight till dark.

Some members had only a few "pun-kin balls," so they had to choose their shots carefully. Generally, though, there was no scarcity of shooting and missing, although deer were not plentiful in that area at that time. There were more than in earlier times. We all remembered stories of the fathers of this group calling everyone in the party to look at a deer print, but that was probably around 1900.

Back to the first Wednesday of the '35 buck season. Someone again mentioned a camp. Again laughter and wisecracks.

On Thursday it rained hard. It was miserable, and it stayed that way all day. Everyone was soaked and frozen again. In one car on the way home, a camp was again mentioned.

Friday was nice but cold. One buck killed. Spirits lifted and everyone was eager for the next day.

Saturday, the whole party would be back in Benner Run, going hard for another buck. Rain, sleet, snow, cold. By early afternoon everyone was huddled in the cold cars. To conserve gas, the engines were not running.

They drove home, freezing, without any deer. Those in the first car spent considerable time discussing the possibility of building a camp. When the cars stopped at Six Mile Run to let off some hunters, the first car found out that the second car had arrived at the same conclusion: "Let's get serious on a camp."

The first meeting was held on January 4, 1936. Everyone who was interested and free attended.

After the usual gossip and discus-



sions of recent adventures, the talk turned to a camp. Money. They would need money. Location. Where would it be located? Name. What would they call it? When could they start? Would the wives oppose?

Mick suggested a dues system to start immediately. Ed said we needed officers: president, secretary, and treasurer. Suggestions for the slate were discussed and the first officers were: President, Earl Fenton; Secretary, Leonard Lamb; Treasurer, Norman Sleight. (The first vice-president, Leonard Lamb, was elected December 31, 1936.) After more discussion it was decided to see if the prospective members could afford 50¢ per month. Times were tough and that might be too much for some to pay. Collecting would start immediately. A meeting was to be held each month.

Other discussion followed. What would be the building material? The group took stock and found they had carpenters, bricklayers, a blacksmith, bakers, a gunsmith, and miners. There were fourteen dues paying members.

They decided to look around for some inexpensive building materials and a location for a camp. Of course the preferred location would be in Benner Run, near the old hunting grounds. They would meet the following month. \$7.50 was collected in dues. They hoped to hunt from the new camp on the first day of buck season, 1936.

### Exciting

The February meeting was exciting. Could anyone else join? Friends, brothers, sons, uncles? An old barn on 5th Street in Philipsburg was going to be torn down. Was it for sale? How much? How soon? Would it do? Not an old barn! Why not? The ideal spot had been found. It was near Benner Run, across the road from another camp. Treasury now \$14. Meet next month at Andy's.

March, 1936. The barn was available but it was a lot of money. If they would tear it down and haul it away, they could have it for \$75 cash. They had \$21 in the treasury. A committee

consisting of Ed, Andy, Bill and Dorsie was sent to see if the barn would be suitable. They were to report back in April on what could be salvaged and approximately what else they would need.

April, May, June and July passed quickly. Dues collected at that point amounted to \$56. The barn would have to be suitable. Additional dues were collected in advance so that the barn could be purchased. The desired location, however, was not suitable to the state forester.

In early August, the various members started tearing down the barn. It was not considered work. It was play and the start of the coveted camp. In late August, the Forestry Department granted a site.

Material salvaged from the barn was transported to Benner Run in a variety of vehicles. Ed McClain was to be paid \$1.50 for each load he delivered. A bread truck was borrowed from the old Morningstar Bakery to haul material to the site. To say the least, the trucks were unreliable. Every hill stalled

**ANDY BLASKO, George Sleight and Joe Fenton pose with a couple of trophies taken years ago. The highest annual camp buck harvest is eight, taken in 1966 and 1967.**





them out. Sediment bowls were cleaned, points adjusted or plugs cleaned, and off they went for a few more miles. Many of the 16-mile trips, about half macadam and half mud, took several hours. Boards, 2x4's, 2x6's, 2x8's, windows, and siding were hauled in the rear of the bakery truck. Bricks were hauled in the small compartment right behind the cab.

The building was to be a rectangle about one foot narrower and two feet shorter than the old barn, two stories high without any partitions. The flue was to go up through the center; it would be the only upstairs heater. The cook stove was to be on the south side and the heating potbelly on the north side of the chimney. Both stoves were to be fired with wood or coal. The main entrance faced the north. Stairs to the second floor were to be on the northwest corner, the rear door on the southwest corner. A 20-foot table, hand-made, would go along the south wall of the first floor from the rear door to the east wall. Plumbing would consist of two buckets to carry water from the stream just outside the west wall and a large old sink. Lights were to be kerosene lamps.

The few members who had cars were to be paid 50¢ per trip for hauling construction workers to the location.

On Labor Day 1936 the cornerstone was laid, and within a day four corners, intermediate piers and the flue foundation were completed so that 2x8's could be put in place for the flooring and the flue could be started. A pit was dug some distance away and a "two-holer" constructed to handle sanitary needs.

Soon the major framework had been completed using 6x8 and 8x10 uprights at the corners and middle of each wall. Heavy rough boards quickly covered the framing, and later were covered with tongue-and-groove siding removed from the barn. A center post was added to support a 6x8 beam down the center which was to hold the upstairs floor joists. Rough boards were nailed down for floors. Cracks between

the floorboards were common. Mick built the flue while the rest of the camp was being constructed around it.

The windows had been obtained from a local doctor and stored in the barn. Extra windows were auctioned off, adding \$3.50 to the treasury.

Work continued at a feverish pace. The November minutes authorized the camp to pay \$8 to Ed for a construction injury, and the first by-laws were written.

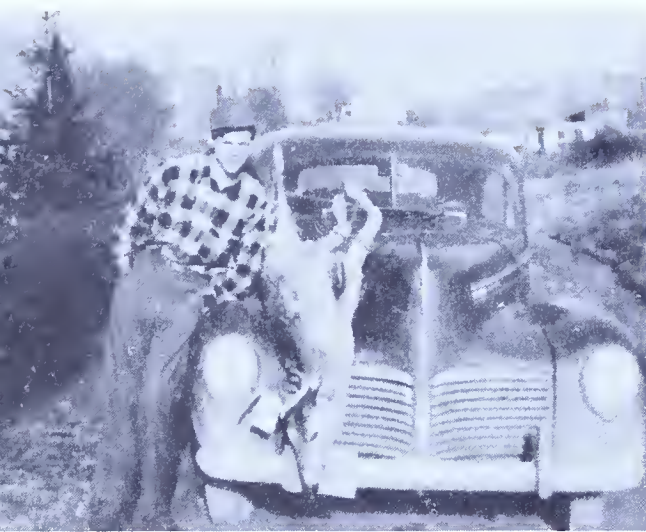
### Finishing Touches

Thanksgiving and the Saturday after were spent adding finishing touches, rough as they were. When the hunters arrived on Sunday for the anticipated deer season, glowing embers remained in the potbelly. What would become the traditional Sunday night supper was served at 5 p.m. The first official season at camp had started.

At dawn on the first day of deer season the thermometer registered 10° be-

**THIS PHOTO** was taken in the early '40s, just as the group was ready to break camp. Over the years several truly big bucks have been sighted, but most eluded the hunters.





**JACK "SAM" SLEIGH, the author, poses with his first buck, taken in 1948 near Rattlesnake Fire Tower.**

low zero. The last to awake at five a.m. saw flames through the cracks in the floorboards. A kerosene lamp had exploded downstairs and the camp's end was almost in sight before it was really finished. But the flames were quickly extinguished and the business of getting breakfast proceeded. Cold from the ground came up unobstructed through the floor and spread to the bedroom. No amount of firing could keep the place warm.

### **Extreme Cold**

The camp cleared before first light but the extreme cold had even the hardiest members back in camp in short order.

At the end of the first week, Andy was the only hunter to have killed a buck. Many had spent their punkin balls, but no one else scored. Many friendships had been reinforced but a few divisions had been started.

On January 4, 1937, the first full year of the camp, which was called "Mill Race," came to a close. Much had been accomplished. Much was yet to be done. But no more would the group have to go home to get out of the rain.

The basic camp was now complete. Improvements, changes, painting, in-

ulating, construction and reconstruction would continue up to the present time. First the floors were covered with new flooring and painted. Walls were then covered with plasterboard, plastered by Frank Middleton, and then painted. A front porch was added, the posts made from some of the last native chestnut to be found in the area. A ceiling was added upstairs and covered with beaded pine, making it much easier to heat.

Beds were donated and the sleeping quarters were packed to capacity, two hunters to a double bed in deer season. In bitter cold weather when the downstairs was fairly warm, Sam coined the saying "It's not so stinking hot up here." No matter how cold it was upstairs, though, Ed would sleep with his bare feet sticking out. Ray had a reputation for stealing all the covers, so Bill pinned them to his side of the bed.

For many years the familiar call of whip-poor-wills could be heard. At night their eyes would shine all along the roads. A few bobwhites could be heard along with the whip-poor-wills. A lone camper heard a grouse drum all night on one trip—a rare treat. The area was full of grouse at that time.

One day in the '40s, the camp held a rattlesnake hunt. A dozen men scoured the mountains. Not a snake was seen until late afternoon when they returned and one rattled right by the porch.

The minutes of 1939 note the authorization of the purchase of eight records, and as long as someone would wind the old Victrola we would suffer through the old favorite, "Hallelujah I'm a Bum."

The lighting system evolved from kerosene wick and Aladdin mantle lamps to Coleman lanterns, to a generator, to propane lights, and finally to electric lights in 1962. The advent of electricity changed several things. An old electric refrigerator was brought in. No more would all the perishables have to be kept submerged in the spring. Many a bottle of cool pop had been tapped around the spring on a



**ED BURTON and Leonard Lamb used shotguns and slugs, like many deer hunters of the time, to drop these trophies during the '50s.**

hot summer day. Gone too was the Victrola.

An old electric stove was added, and the coal cookstove was used only as an extra. The coal stove had baked many of Joe's pies, apple struddle by Basty, eggs by Dorsey, bringing complaints from a few and admiration from many. Few will ever forget the smoke that always burned their eyes when Andy made pancakes before the sun came up and the hunting day started.

About the time of the electric stove, the big eaters disappeared. In their younger days it had been nothing for Norman and Dorsey to eat several plates heaped high with mashed potatoes and covered with "litwiley." Half a dozen eggs, bacon and a pile of pancakes were the order for breakfast. George would eat cold pancakes all day after having them for breakfast.

The deer hunting has continued for fifty years with varying success. One buck the first year and two the second. One doe season, the third year, the camp killed six. One, two, or three bucks were killed per season until 1948, when the camp got the sixth buck on Thursday—the legal number that year. Everyone rejoiced at reaching that plateau.

We also got six in 1949, seven in 1955, and eight in 1966 and 1967. Some of these peaks were due to the number of hunters in various years, but the kill also reflected the available bucks in any particular year. In the last fifteen years, only one, two or none have been seen hanging from the meat pole.

Over the years several truly big bucks have been sighted but most have eluded our hunters. The largest rack taken in the first fifty years has been a 10-point.

The first recorded dishwasher was Joe, in 1937. No mention is made of the gratuity, but you can guess it was room and board. The most successful dishwasher was Ray. He washed dishes in

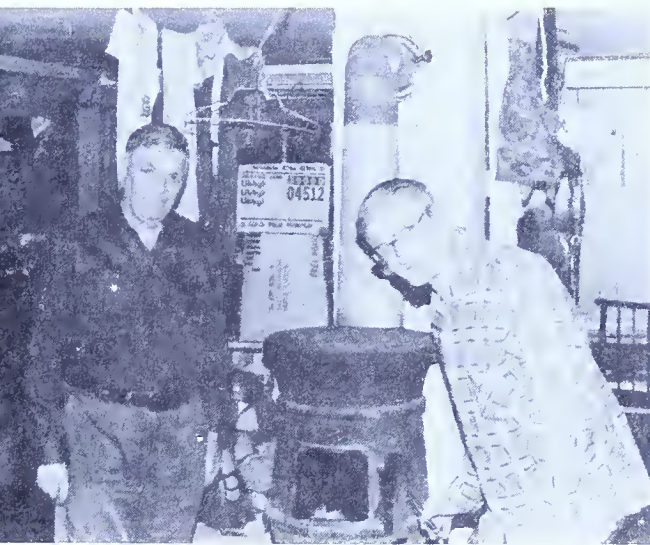


1954, joined the camp in 1955, and shot a buck a little way up the hollow that year. Other "famous" dishwashers were Tommy and Peck. Peck was a great story teller. The first recorded grocery bill was \$46.90 for the week. That was in 1942. Current grocery bills run around \$125 per week, but no big eaters sit around the table now. Part of the 1942 order was two chickens at 25¢ each.

One of the first deer stories is of Basty walking several miles, flashlight in hand, to arrive at his favorite tree before daylight. He shinnied up to a comfortable limb to await first light. For years he shot a buck out of the same tree on the first day. Several times after he shot his buck, someone else would climb the tree. Eddie shot the second buck he saw from the tree one first day after Basty got his.

### **Best Records**

Lamby and Joe had the best records. Lamby shot more than one deer breaking back through the drive. Joe shot a buck in mid-air as it jumped a fire line. Sam talked to a buck walking between the Big Rocks one morning. He loudly proclaimed that anyone walking through the rocks shouldn't be wearing a fur coat. Someone else saw the deer walk out and told Sam it was a legal buck. Andy was huddled in a small ravine when a drive came off and a herd of deer, running at full tilt,



**EARL FENTON** and Dorsey Burton, the remaining charter members, stoke up the old wood stove in readiness for the 1985 season.

jumped right over him. He missed a buck at short range in the process.

Andy could climb any tree, with or without limbs. Sam couldn't get up one with a ladder. That's probably why he liked "the rocks." He could just walk up on top of them. Several fellows boosted Sam up many a tree.

Few camp members had watches. Everyone just seemed to know when to go in for lunch or supper. Joe lugged an alarm clock around in the back of his "Richy" all one morning so he would not be late for work. Many fellows hunted all day and played cards all night. Some were going upstairs to bed while others were coming downstairs to start getting breakfast ready. Norman is reported to have tied himself in a tree so he wouldn't fall out if he fell asleep.

At the start of a drive from Spook Hollow to Schnars Ridge, Joe wounded a buck which ran down over the steep side into Benner Run. Joe followed it down and killed it at the bottom. The drive went on through. Joe hauled his 4-point back up the steep hill and in to the camp. Meanwhile, another 7-point was shot on the drive.

During the 1950 season a pair of hunters went in to hunt Pretzel Ridge. Sam was boosted into a small tree to

watch as the others put on a short drive. When Jack returned, Sam was on the ground, cold. Jack was climbing the tree, his gun on some limbs above him when he spotted a big buck his dad had put out. The buck was so close Jack could have hit it with a stick. So he tried to hold on to the tree with one hand and shoot with the other. Needless to say, he missed.

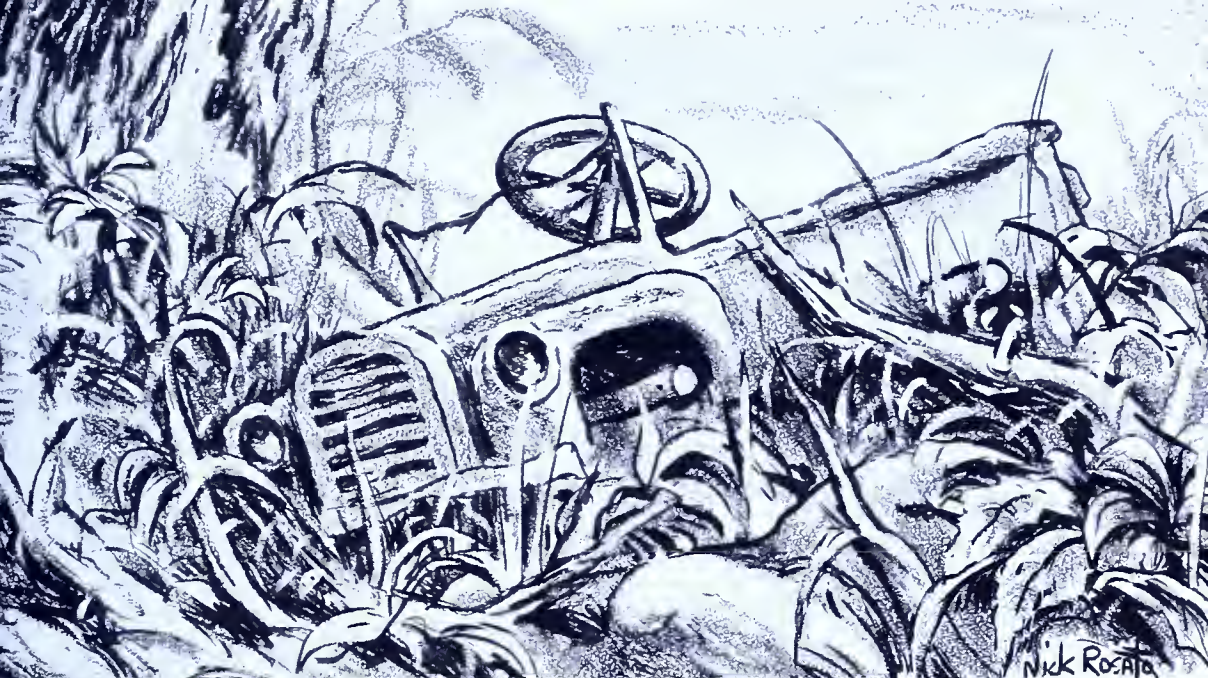
On one short overnight, Basty and a friend looked out the front door and saw a bear lying just off the steps. The friend closed and locked the door to keep the bear out. After a while it got up and ambled around the camp and disappeared in the laurel. Another time one walked down the cobblestone path, went around the camp and on down across the road. Several other bears have been seen near the cabin in the first fifty years.

The first members to leave the fold were Marvin and Mick, on December 31, 1938. The first new member to join the camp was Joe in 1940. Joe was to remain a bulwark of the hunting team until 1985, when he was incapacitated by a stroke. Other members went their separate ways—Harry, Alf, Leonard, and Norman.

On June 9, 1951, Elmer died, and George was never the same after that. Other members now deceased are Sam, George, Andy, Ed, and Basty. Sam was cut down by a stroke about 100 yards from camp while waiting for a drive to come across the ridge. Joe came through with the drive and found him on the ground.

About fifteen others who belonged to the camp have left for one reason or another. The membership of Mill Race Camp has stayed at about fifteen for the first fifty years.





WE FIRST noticed the truck about 25 years ago. We were hunting around the old farm with a long time friend who was 30 years our senior.

## *The Shiny Red Truck*

By Lou Rodia

*THE shiny red plastic truck was just another toy for 10-month-old Samantha. She was just old enough to sit and bounce on it, and that's exactly what a red plastic inflatable truck is for. After all, toys are supposed to be fun for kids.*

*Everybody enjoyed watching little Samantha having such fun on her Christmas toy. But nobody else could really understand that a little red truck in another time, and in another place, is a reminder of a few sad times and lots of happy ones.*

A little red truck was part of the litter on an old farm in Pike County where we have hunted deer for many years. The farm was abandoned around the turn of the century. The farm house collapsed and rotted away years ago. Only the foundation and some remnants of the big beams remain. Stone fences still separated the reverting fields but were no longer intact. At one time they contained live-

stock. The stones had to be taken out of the fields anyway, so the plow could break the soil and crops could grow.

Trees now grow where at one time a family had tried to eke out a living on the rocky harsh land. Deer now roam where livestock once grazed.

Some time back the family gave up and moved away, leaving questions as to how they had come to this desolate spot in the first place, and why. What happened to them? Who were they? Where did they go? There are no answers to these questions. Nor do we know who put the red truck there much later.

We first noticed the truck about 25 years ago. We were deer hunting around the old farm with a long time friend who was 30 years our senior. Doc hunted, all in all, over 55 years in that area, and we were lucky to have him as a partner during the last 15 of those years before he died.

He and I were on the way to an area the locals called, for obvious reasons,



I GUESS one of the reasons I'm hesitant is that someday the tree might also be gone, like the little red truck, and I'm not sure who I would want to find it missing after I'm gone.

hunting would be okay, providing Doc took it easy. We made the trip seven more times. The last year we went together he dropped a deer on a shot few others would have even attempted.

The drive to the old farm and visits to our stands became an annual custom. Also part of our ritual was checking out the big pine tree with the bear claw marks and, of course, the red truck. Each year the truck was still there.

For some reason the truck took on a significance for Doc. As he got older he talked a lot about how things were in the old days, and how he had been captain of the hunt for years, and how he had helped organize a lot of the activities which were a big part of the club's reason for being.

He talked of hunting successes and misses, and of club members who had come and gone. And, in the telling, he would somehow come back to the red truck. Would it still be there? Would it be gone? Somehow, the truck was important to him. It tied him to the farm and the hunting. They were growing old together it seemed.

His death in mid-summer was not unexpected. But as always is the case when someone close passes away, there is the hurt, the sadness and the helplessness. It was not until the time to pack for our annual trek to the old farm that we felt the full force of the loss.

We had already resolved that we would seek out a new area and new people to hunt with. After so many years, going back to the club would have been a problem.

We joined a group that hunted about 20 miles from the area we had enjoyed with Doc for so long. On our first trip to the new place we went a day early to thoroughly scout the country. On the way we passed the entrance to the club where we used to hunt. There was time

the old farm. We parked the pickup and Doc led us to a towering pine tree.

"Before we take our stands I want to show you the bear claw marks on this pine," he listed as his reason for heading us over to the tree. A bear had clawed the bark up to about eight feet from the ground, indicating that it was a really big bear.

At the base of the tree was a rusty little red metal truck. The wheels were gone. Someone had thrown some trash into the woods at the end of the road and the truck wound up at the base of the tree. According to Doc the truck had been there about 20 years.

### Hunting Ritual

Every year it was part of his hunting ritual to stop and see if the truck was still there. We made the trip with him for 15 consecutive deer seasons. Each year the truck was there. Each year, age took its toll. The truck got rustier and rustier.

Doc held up well, despite his advancing years, but time was running out for him, too. A coronary all but ended his life at one point. A pace-maker got him back into limited activity again, and after the mid-summer setback, he was ready to go back to the deer woods for limited hunting.

His doctor — and ours, as well — indicated the trip up and back and limited



for a quick visit. We dropped in and said hello to the caretaker, and visited with some of the members during lunch. On our departure, we took the road to the old farm and parked near the big pine tree. We sat for a while and finally walked over. The bear claw marks were still in evidence. The little red truck was gone.

A search around the area produced nothing. Why the truck was gone or where it went were added to the already long list of mysteries about the old farm.

In the ten years since the truck disappeared, we still stop at the club every year to say hello, and we still make the visit to the big pine tree. There is no red truck anymore, but there are a lot of memories. Friends, tried and true, are hard to come by. When we lose one, a new one may come along, but none replaces the ones we lose.

I haven't taken anyone to the pine tree yet. Maybe some day I will. I almost did last year. My son joined me for the annual deer hunt. He didn't ask why I left him at the cabin when I went to visit the old club. He's old enough to remember Doc as the buddy who used to share hunting trips with me, and he knows Doc and I used to hunt not far from where we were staying.

Maybe next year. Maybe he'd like to see the pine tree. Maybe he'd like to hear the story about the big bear that

clawed the bark. Maybe he'd like to hear some of the stories about the deer we bagged and the deer we missed.

I guess one of the reasons I'm hesitant is that some day the tree might also be gone, like the little red truck, and that I might not be around to miss it. It would be an ironic twist of fate for the tree to go the way of the red truck, and I am not sure who I would want to find the tree gone after I am gone.

For Doc, his tie to the deer camp was the little red truck. For me, it is a tall, bear-clawed pine tree. It, like me, is getting older.

### As for Samantha

As for 10-month-old Samantha, she'll have a good time playing on her little red truck for as long as she can, and we'll share the fun she has in doing it. And maybe some day when she's old enough, and just might find this in a file drawer somewhere, she might understand why I didn't have as much fun with her red truck as everyone else seemed to have.

After all, there are glad memories and there are sad memories. And thankfully, there are good memories—glad and sad. Little red trucks around deer season fall in there someplace.

Perhaps I'll wake up some day to find the little red truck, and the pine tree, and Doc and myself all in the same place. Who knows.



**SERGEANT JOHN KROMEL, U.S. Air Force Recruiting Office, Greensburg, recently presented Southwest Region Director Don Madl with the Air Force Recruiting Service Certificate of Appreciation, in recognition of the Game Commission's efforts to promote American ideals and principles through our public relations programs.**

# FIELD NOTES

## Good Tool

**LYCOMING COUNTY**—Many people have been asking me about the effects of the new Game and Wildlife Code. Violations—in my district, anyway—seemed to be down somewhat, and many of those who were apprehended were shocked by the new, higher penalties. Jacklighting and hunting out of season incidents seem to have remained the same. Violations for spotlighting during the regular deer seasons were rare, probably because of the high visibility of the act, and the fact that most sportsmen support the restriction. Roadhunting, on the other hand, seems to be a growing problem. Overall, the new law is working well. —WCO Dan Marks, Williamsport.



## Moving In

**SCHUYLKILL COUNTY**—Although considered marginal bear country, an increasing number of bruins are taking up residence here. Last year I investigated two incidents involving bears digging up septic systems. So, if you find a bear in this county with a silly grin on his face, that may be one of the culprits. —WCO John J. Shutkufski, Pottsville.

## Expensive Lessons

**McKEAN COUNTY**—One day an individual kept hunting after hours, willing to chance a \$15 fine, and another person used an ATV to drag his deer from a State Game Lands, thinking the \$25 fine was worthwhile. Neither of these violators, however, was aware of the Game and Wildlife Code that took affect last July. Consequently, each was surprised to receive a \$100 fine. As the late hunter put it, "I wouldn't have considered being out there if I had known the fine was so much." —WCO Jim Rankin, Port Allegany.

## Feed 'Em Naturally

**JUNIATA COUNTY**—The best time to feed wildlife is not in the winter, but now, in the spring and summer. By planting trees and shrubs, and making brush piles, for example, you'll be providing food and cover for not just this coming winter, but for many winters to come. —WCO Dan Clark, Honey Grove.

## Good Solution

**ELK COUNTY**—I was in the local barber shop when I overheard a young hunter talking about his first deer season. He was unable to obtain a rifle that properly fit him and, as a result, he missed several deer. While I'm sure that's a problem for many new hunters, one possible remedy is practice. Parents with beginning hunters should take the kids woodchuck hunting. That way the youngsters will get valuable shooting experience and the farmers will get some relief from the varmints. —WCO Dick Bodenhorn, Ridgway.



## Sock It to 'Em

**LEHIGH COUNTY**—Several months ago, with help from Lowhill Township Supervisor Gerry Hunsicker and State Police Corporal Ralph Fiorenza, Fogelsville, I was able to successfully prosecute an individual for dumping over a half a dump truck load of trash on property open to public hunting. The guilty party paid \$300 in fines to the Game Commission and \$520 in cleanup and disposal costs to the township. Thanks to the previously mentioned assistance, what would have remained an eyesore was cleaned up, properly disposed of, and—best of all—paid for. —WCO Tim Grenoble, Fogelsville.

## Tradition

**JEFFERSON COUNTY**—Paul Means, Brookville, celebrated his 83rd birthday on the opening day of the antlered deer season by taking a 5-point. That was the fifth time Paul has taken a buck on his birthday and, coincidentally, it was taken in the same spot he killed his first buck, 60 years ago. —WCO Donald Chaybin, Brookville.

## Not Encouraged

While most forms of outdoor recreation are encouraged on State Game Lands, the use of snowmobiles, trail-bikes and other ATVs is strictly regulated. Except for public roads and Game Lands roads clearly marked open to motorized vehicular traffic, it's against the law to drive on State Game Lands. Among the reasons is the fact that there are many places where people can enjoy ATVs, but relatively few where a person can enjoy remote, natural settings without being disturbed by modern sounds. If you can identify violators or their vehicles, please report them. If respect for the land doesn't discourage people from riding ATVs on Game Lands, perhaps the \$100 fine will. —LMO Barry S. Zaffuto, Ebensburg.

## Double Standards

**WESTMORELAND COUNTY**—It seems everybody wants game laws strictly enforced except when they're the violators. Then they want the laws enforced on the other guy. —WCO D. L. Neideigh, Greensburg.



## Bring Plenty of Salt, Buddy

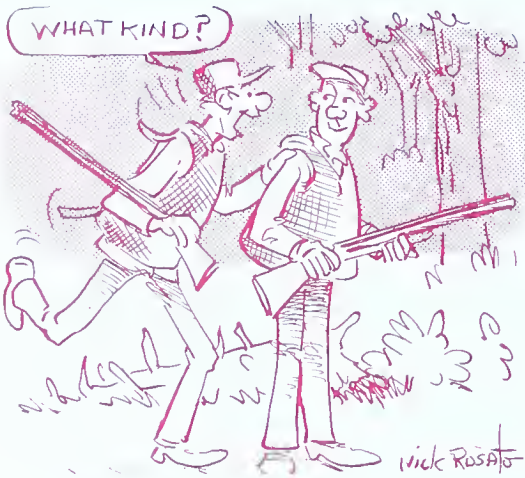
**VENANGO COUNTY**—A while back I decided to spend my day off with my 6-year-old daughter Amy. I offered to take her anywhere she wanted, thinking she would choose a movie, shopping or some other normal place. She chose, however, the deer pit. Well, that's where I took her and a friend, fully expecting the girls to be repulsed by the sight. But, to my amazement, they were actually very interested; they even helped me salt some hides. I'm certainly glad Amy has such an interest in my job, but I can't help but wonder what's going to happen when she starts dating and a young boy asks her where she would like to go. —WCO Leonard Hribar, Seneca.

## In Just Five Years

**DAUPHIN COUNTY**—Anybody who thinks there aren't any deer left should consult his local wildlife officer. In 1983 we picked up about 200 road-killed deer in my district. In 1987 we picked up over 350. —Skip Littwin, Hummelstown.

## Plan Ahead

**PHILADELPHIA COUNTY**—Summer is a great time to contact private landowners for permission to hunt in the fall. Such permission is getting to be more important every year, but by making early requests, it's easier to get. — Richard J. Shire, Philadelphia.



## Priorities

**BRADFORD COUNTY**—Arnie Hayden, one of our biologists, and I went grouse hunting in the late season. When I came upon a good looking covert I called down for Arnie to help me hunt it. I yelled and yelled, but my cries brought no response. A short time later, though, I yelled, “Does anybody want a candy bar?” Within minutes Arnie was by my side, asking for a candy bar. I had to explain that I didn’t have a candy bar, that I was just wondering if anybody wanted one. But I did say, “While you’re here, Arnie, let’s hit this nice looking cover.” It’s often said that you can get more with sugar. I guess that goes for candy bars, too. — WCO Bill Bower, Troy.

## Teamwork

**SNYDER COUNTY**—Of all the arrests I made last year, 61 percent came as a result of information I received from people who took the time to become involved. Thanks, folks, and I hope to hear from more of you in the future. — WCO John Roller, Beavertown.

## Over a Million Hours

**CLEARFIELD COUNTY**—Robert Undercoffler, Woodland, has built over 200 bluebird boxes and given them to the agency. The fruits of his generosity are most evident, with bluebirds perched on telephone lines and fences throughout my district. I can’t help but imagine the effects we would realize if every sportsman built and erected just one box, planted one tree or built one brush pile. If every sportsman spent only one hour on a habitat improvement project, I’m sure the results would be very dramatic. — WCO Don Zimmerman, Drifting.

## And Working Well

**CENTRE COUNTY**—All a person has to do to evaluate the merits of our deer management program is examine the annual harvests over the past 30 years. It would be impossible to have sustained, record-level harvests if the system wasn’t working. — WCO George Mock, Coburn.

## Moving to Higher Ground

**CLEARFIELD COUNTY**—Larry Gallo, Ramey, was hiking along Black Bear Run, near Philipsburg, last January when he heard a squealing sound. He looked and saw a black bear carrying something in its mouth. The bear came within 20 yards, but when it saw Larry, it dropped what it was carrying and ran off. Larry went to see what the bear had dropped and was surprised to find a new born cub, with its eyes still closed, squalling with all its might. Larry quickly backed away and then waited. In just a few minutes mom returned, picked up her baby and then proceeded on her way. We suspect that the bear’s den may have been flooded because of the warm temperatures and heavy rains we were having at the time. Regardless, Larry certainly had a most memorable hike. — WCO Jack Furlong, Ramey.



## Encouraging

**CRAWFORD COUNTY**—Over 3000 common goldeneyes were counted at Pymatuning during Audubon's Christmas bird count. That's more than I've ever seen in one day at the area, and I hope it's a sign that waterfowl numbers are starting to recover. — WCO Dave Myers, Linesville.

## Nature's Beauty

I'm convinced that chickadees were created to entertain outdoorsmen in winter. That thought occurred to me when a flock showed up while I was checking beaver traps. I then thought of all the times I've sat, freezing, on deer stand, thinking there was absolutely nothing alive in the woods, only to have a flock of the black-capped entertainers show up and begin feeding all around me, practically landing on my head. Hanging upside down and giving me their quizzical looks, they never fail to elicit a smile from me. — LMO Keith Harbaugh, Meadville.



## Getting Popular

**CLINTON COUNTY**—Bobcats sure seem to be staging a comeback in this area. Last winter I trapped three at one site and two more at different locations. They were each weighed, measured, tagged and then released. In addition, I sighted two other cats and found tracks in many areas. — WCO John Wasserman, Renovo.



## All In a Day's Work

**PERRY COUNTY**—On a cold January morning following a warm spell, LMO Clay VanBuskirk found a bunch of sorry looking turkey vultures sitting in a field. Clay gathered the ones that seemed to be in the worst shape and put them in his vehicle. A fallen tree across a road delayed Clay on his way to the heated storage shed where he was going to put the birds. But by the time he cleared the roadway, the birds had revived in the heat of Clay's car. Those of you who know what turkey vultures smell like can imagine, I'm sure, that it will be a long time before Clay forgets the day he saved the turkey vultures. — WCO Leroy Everett, Newport.

## Respectful

**MERCER COUNTY**—When two young archers asked Farm-Game cooperator John Lawrence for permission to hunt John said sure, providing they respected his property. Later, at Christmas time, they sent John a card in which they told him how much they enjoyed hunting on his property, of all the wildlife they saw, and that they really appreciated being able to hunt on his land. With such a show of thanks, I'm sure those two hunters will have a place to hunt in the future. — WCO James Donatelli, Mercer.

## Disappeared

**ALLEGHENY COUNTY**—One night awhile back I issued two men permits for roadkilled deer. I told each to put his deer's head and hide on the rack on the back of my vehicle. Later, on my way out, I found the remains of only one deer. I immediately called the two men. One said he put the head and hide where I had told him. The other said he put the remains of his deer on the top of a Jeep parked in the parking lot. It wasn't mine. I just can't imagine what the "lucky" recipient thought. — WCO D. E. Hockenberry.

## Grounded

**ADAMS COUNTY**—On a snowy January morning mailman Barry Dayhoff couldn't start his delivery vehicle at the Hanover Post Office. When he and Clyde Berwager opened the hood a rabbit leaped out. Apparently, the day before, the rabbit found shelter from



the heavy snow against the warm engine. And he certainly made himself at home. He chewed a large wire between the coil and the distributor, two wires from the coil to the ignition, and a vacuum hose. Now we know that neither rain, sleet, hail or snow can stop the postal service, but a cottontail, that's something else. — WCO Larry Haynes, Gettysburg.

## Do Not Disturb

**ADAMS COUNTY**—While you're out enjoying Penn's Woods please leave baby animals alone, don't take them. In all likelihood, mom is nearby, quietly waiting for you to leave. Remember, animals aren't orphans until you take them home. — WCO Mike Dubaich, Aspers.

## Useful Devices

**ARMSTRONG COUNTY**—Telephone answering machines are getting popular. One evening I was returning calls and got two machines in a row, and on the next night, two out three calls I returned reached answering machines. One benefit of these devices is that the users at least know I returned their calls. — WCO Al Scott, Rural Valley.

## Get Involved

**BLAIR COUNTY**—Keeping hunters and others informed is one of the agency's top priorities, and one of the best methods is by presenting programs at sportsmen's club meetings. I've noticed dwindling attendance at these meetings, however, which makes it impossible for me to discuss and explain current issues to many people. Please, don't just sit around and grumble, get involved. We appreciate your input. — WCO Don Martin, Williamsburg.

## Good Hunting

**CAMERON COUNTY**—Considering that fewer deer are taken in this county during the muzzleloader season than nearly any other county, coupled with the fact that the county deer population has remained above our management goal for several years, this county might be one of the muzzleloaders' best kept secrets. Perhaps you might consider coming here this year to fill a deer tag or two. — WCO Joe Carlos, Driftwood.



# Record Buck Harvest

PENNSYLVANIA deer hunters, who enjoyed an all-time buck harvest in 1986, took just one year to smash that mark and come up with a new record.

"Any suggestion that our deer population is dropping is destroyed by reports filed by successful hunters," noted Wildlife Management Bureau Director Dale Sheffer in announcing 157,547 bucks and 177,242 antlerless deer were tagged during the 1987-88 seasons.

Sheffer says the harvest report is based on 87,702 report cards filed by successful buck hunters and 85,254 cards filed by successful doe hunters. Slightly over half of successful buck hunters file report cards, while just under 50 percent of the antlerless hunters file reports, as required by law.

"For the first time in quite a few years, the size of the antlerless harvest was what we wanted," said Sheffer. In 1986, the antlerless harvest was about 14,000 below the desired level. That year hunters took 150,359 bucks and 149,655 antlerless deer, based on report cards filed by 83,873 successful buck hunters and 73,259 successful antlerless hunters.

"The fact the buck harvest is rising reflects what is actually happening to the whitetail population," noted Sheffer. Deer are like robins, beetles, human beings, chickens, dogs and cattle; at the time of birth (or hatching), there are as many females being born as there are males. That's the way nature



**ERNIE INZANA, JR.,** State College, was hunting on SGL 54, Jefferson County, when he dropped this 9-point trophy.

works. If the buck harvest is rising, that means the number of bucks in the population is rising. And, if the buck population is escalating, so is the number of antlerless deer."

## Eighth Straight Year

Sheffer mentioned that 1987 was the eighth straight year buck report cards exceeded 70,000, and that of the 25 most successful buck seasons in Pennsylvania's history, 24 have occurred in the last 24 years.

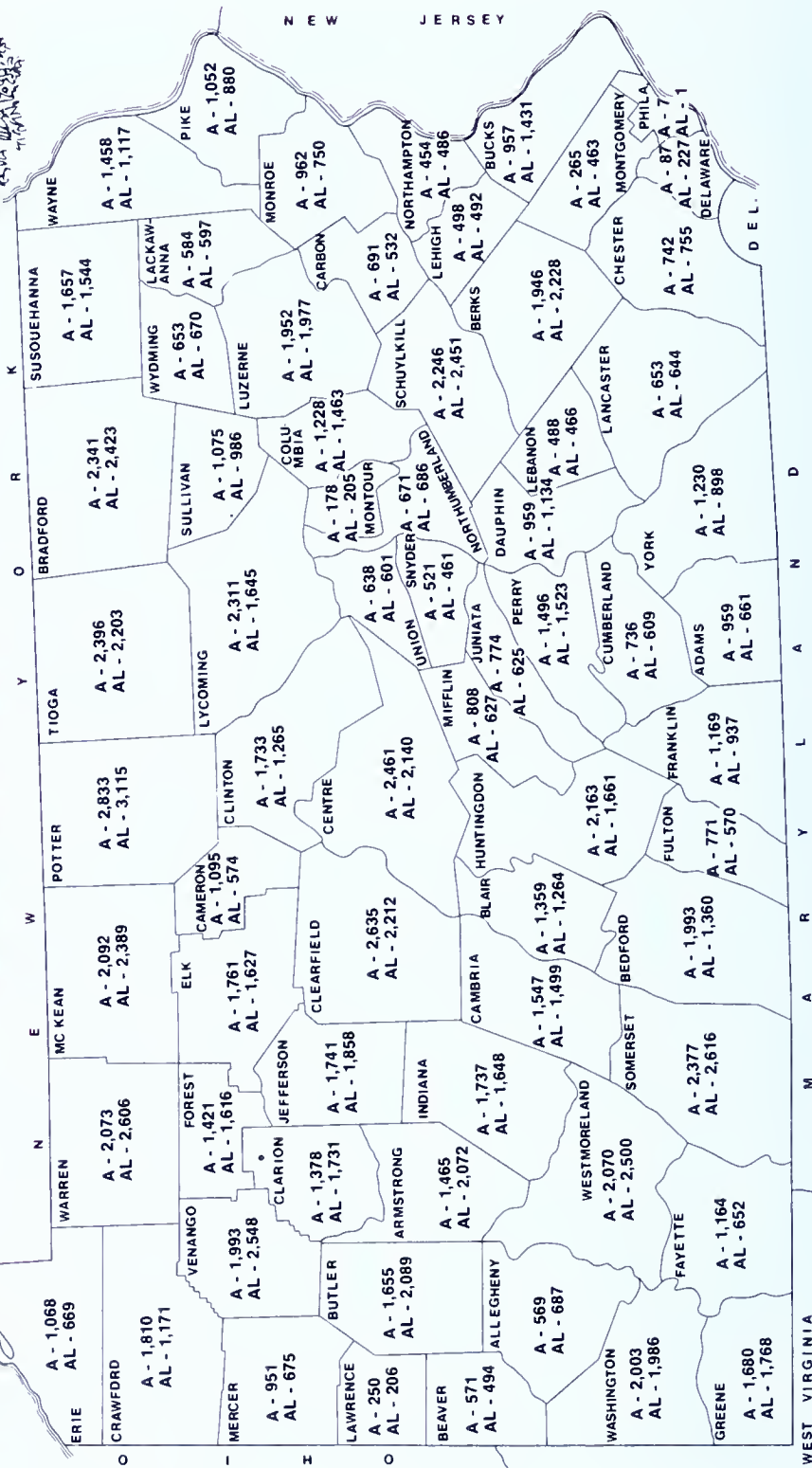
Leading 1987 buck counties were Clearfield, 5610; Centre, 4948; Potter, 4941; Tioga, 4671; and Bradford, 4450. Top antlerless counties were: Potter, 6466; McKean, 6244; Clearfield, 6044; Warren, 5865; and Centre, 5091. Highest in total harvest were: Clearfield, 11,564; Potter, 11,407; McKean, 10,490; Centre, 10,039; and Warren, 9995.

Maps featuring the reported and calculated 1987 harvests follow. The reported harvest is the actual number of report cards received by the agency. The calculated harvest is based on reporting rates, the percentage of hunters who report the deer they have taken.





# 1987 REPORTED DEER HARVEST



**ANTLERED DEER**  
(SYMBOL - A)

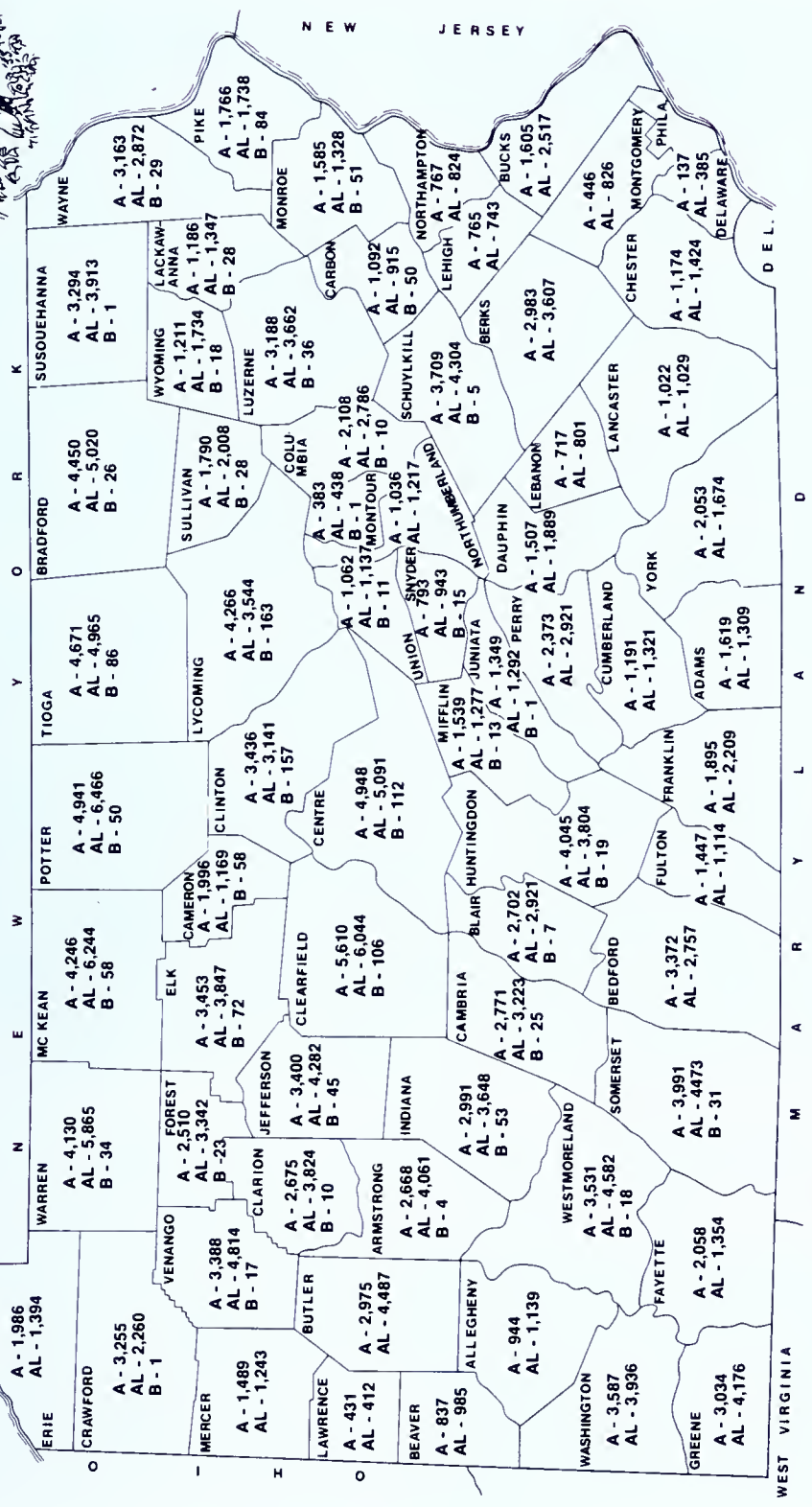
**ANTLERLESS DEER**  
(SYMBOL - AL)

|                   |        |
|-------------------|--------|
| REGULAR SEASON    | 81,520 |
| COUNTY UNKNOWN    | 441    |
| ARCHERY SEASON    | 5,399  |
| BUTLER ELK SEASON | 222    |

TOTAL DEER HARVEST ..... 172,956



1987 CALCULATED  
DEER & BEAR HARVEST



| ANTLERED DEER<br>(SYMBOL - A) |         | ANTLERLESS DEER<br>(SYMBOL - AL)                  |  |
|-------------------------------|---------|---|--|
| ALL SEASONS                   | 156,742 |   |  |
| COUNTY UNKNOWN                | 805     |   |  |
| TOTAL                         | 157,547 |   |  |
|                               |         | GRAND TOTAL BEAR HARVEST .. 1,556<br>(SYMBOL - B) |  |
|                               |         | GRAND TOTAL DEER HARVEST .... 334,789             |  |

## *In Memoriam*

**Cecil Hancock**  
1897-1987  
District Game Protector  
McKean County  
Retired 1962; 27 years

**Albert R. Bachman**  
1912-1987  
Chief of Real Estate  
Harrisburg  
Retired 1971; 35 years

**Owen E. Seelye**  
1919-1987  
District Game Protector  
Juniata County  
Retired 1953; 7 years

**Leslie H. Wood**  
1891-1987  
District Game Protector  
Tioga County  
Retired 1957; 35 years

**Rollen Heffelfinger**  
1893-1987  
Administrative Officer  
Harrisburg  
Retired 1958; 29 years

**John M. Haverstick**  
1899-1987  
District Game Protector  
Lancaster County  
Retired 1961; 30 years

**Marlin E. Kohler**  
1911-1987  
Purchasing Agent  
Harrisburg  
Retired 1976; 35 years

**A. Clinton Ganster**  
1905-1987  
Bounty Claim Agent  
Harrisburg  
Retired 1967; 30 years

**Michael Grabany**  
1908-1988  
Game Conservation Officer  
Centre County  
Retired 1973; 32 years

**Dorothy M. Durkin**  
1922-1988  
Executive Secretary  
Harrisburg  
Retired 1983; 31 years

**Robert D. Reed**  
1899-1988  
Information Specialist  
Harrisburg  
Retired 1962; 29 years

**Anita Walters**  
1929-1988  
Clerk-Steno  
Northwest Regional Office  
Retired 1987; 19 years

## **"Take Pride in Pennsylvania"**

Twelve "Take Pride in Pennsylvania" winners have been selected as finalists for the 1987 "Take Pride In America" campaign, in recognition of their efforts to promote the wise use of our natural and cultural resources. They are: Rotary Walk, Uniontown; Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, Philadelphia; Philadelphia Electric Company, Philadelphia; Boy Scout Troop 174, Mount Carmel; Friends of the Woods, Yardley; "Outdoor Pennsylvania," WPSX-TV, University Park; Schuylkill Canal Association, Oaks; The Schuylkill River Greenway Association, Wyomissing; Chester County Parks and Recreation Department, West Chester; Blue Marsh Lake, Corps of Engineers, Leesport; Office of Surface Mining, Pittsburgh; and Gettysburg National Military Park, Gettysburg.

For information on the 1988 campaign write "Take Pride in Pennsylvania," Department of Environmental Resources, Bureau of State Parks, P.O. Box 1467, Harrisburg, PA 17120.



# ON THE WATER

**T**HE TROUBLE with summer is that there's too much to it. It's too green, too leafy, too lush, too complicated. It's too much of a good thing. This may be okay with wild animals, but not with those of us who want to see them. Winter is simple and wildlife is more obvious in the barren landscape. Now, what had been a bunch of spindly-limbed saplings has become an impenetrable screen. Woods that seemed so open a couple of seasons ago are now thickly brushy. Even fields, if they're not cut, will become too tall to see anything except an alerted deer's ears. I think I've found, however, a solution to the problem and it's by far the best and most pleasant way to view Pennsylvania's wildlife in summer: go by boat.

Any watery opening, a lake or pond of any size, creates an unobstructed space and provides a wider view. Furthermore, water is a natural center of wildlife activity in the hot months. It hosts not only those normally at home in an aquatic world, but also draws those considered landlubbers to its edge to eat, drink or cool off. To a wildlife observer afloat in a small boat or canoe, there's a show going on all around.

A number of State Game Lands, as well as many other public lands, have lakes and ponds on them. Small boats are permitted on many, although certain restrictions usually apply. As a general rule, only rowboats and canoes, powered by hand, are permitted on State Game Lands impoundments. (Pymatuning, SGL 214, may be the only exception.) That's great, though, because rowboats and canoes are quiet, they're ideal for finding and sneaking up on wild animals. Furthermore, as State Game Lands are managed specifically for wildlife, viewing opportunities are much better than on lakes with housing or commercial development or with recreational motorboating.

As an added enticement, many of the bodies of water on State Game Lands are small, they are often overlooked by fishermen, which can mean a good day of angling, as well as watching wildlife. A boat that can be carried or portaged easily will make more remote ponds accessible. The regional Game Commission offices, and Harrisburg headquarters, have Game Lands maps available, which show water as well as land features.

Canoeing is one of my favorite summertime activities. I like to get a friend, take along our fishing rods, a camera or two, and binoculars, and then set adrift on an isolated lake. We cast out our lines and relax, drifting and watching. We never have to wait long for something of interest to appear.

## Morning and Evening

Even on the water, morning and evening are the most likely times to see wildlife. I've taken a number of photos of deer early and late in the day as they came to the edge to wade and eat aquatic plants. Does and young fawns have stopped before me to nurse on the shoreline, while bucks sporting swelling antlers were always a treat.

For an upland hunter like myself, being on the water now is a chance to see a different brand of wildlife. Not only have I been able to get a closer look at all kinds of ducks and geese, but also many water birds I rarely encoun-

## Another View...

by Linda Steiner



**TO SEE** wildlife, it's best to go where there's an opening plus an attraction: to the water. Besides, over these next few months, that's also the coolest place to be.

ter, herons, egrets, bitterns, coots, rails, snipe. I've paddled up to and photographed muskrats, beavers and otters, and spent a long time watching raccoons in the shallows. The water is a great place from which to watch many types of perching and soaring birds. Songbirds, from yellow warblers to indigo buntings, flit in the bushes on shore, kingbirds fly out overhead to snatch insects, swallows skim all around the boat, kingfishers break the water mirror in a shower of bright spray. I've laid back in the boat and watched circling hawks, ospreys, even bald eagles against the blue.

### **Big Advantage**

A boat gives a wildlife watcher or photographer a big advantage. He doesn't have to sneak through noisy underbrush to get near his subject, a problem every hunter can sympathize with. Instead, with camera ready, the boater can slump down or bend forward to give himself a low silhouette, cut the motor or put away the paddle, and glide silently right up to the animal. Most wild animals aren't wary of intrusion that comes in this form or from this direction, and many are usually quite tolerant or even curious. The numerous young animals at this time of

year are even less suspicious than the adults and more cooperative for pictures.

Although there are many waterways throughout the state that are excellent spots to watch summer wildlife, my favorite is Shohola Dam, on SGL 180, in Pike County. This is a big impoundment, with a spectacular waterfall and impressive rocky gorge just downstream from the dam. Upstream is a shallow lake covering over 1100 acres of flooded timber. There are boat launches (hand propelled or electric motors only) and good fishing around the thousands of stumps, snags and standing deadwood.

The lake is surrounded by typical Pocono habitat—blueberry, mountain laurel and wild azalea, which is most fragrant and flowery in the right season. The land rises to brushy oak forests, with some scattered evergreens. The headwaters are swampy. Part of the lake is a waterfowl refuge, which makes the chances of seeing wildlife even better.

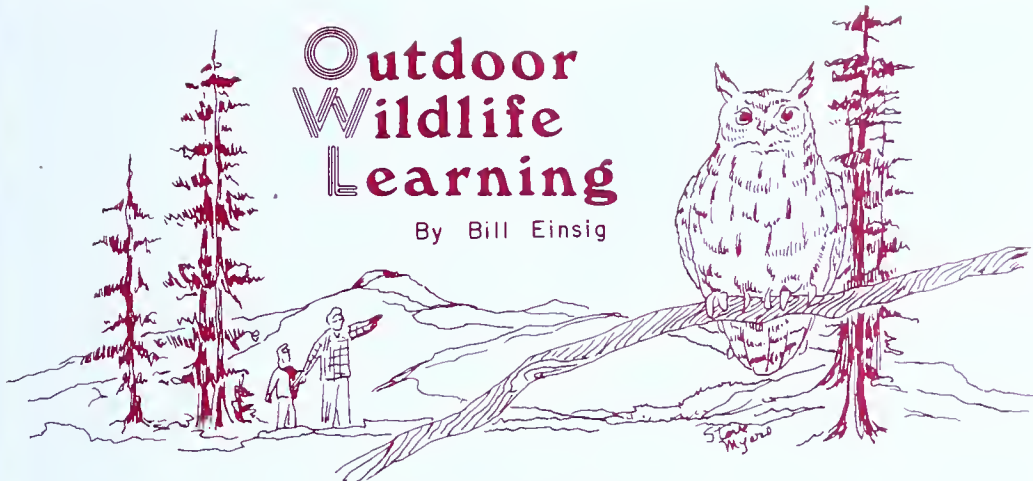
Canada geese and mallards and their young are common sights at Shohola, but from the boat you are likely to see anything the region has to offer, even bear. I always take at least two rolls of film and sometimes run short. The extra effort of paddling into the upper reaches of the lake, where fewer fishermen go, usually rewards me with more wildlife encounters. Shohola is the sort of place I like to put the canoe on early and stay late, which means plenty of lunch and suntan oil. Although good, the fishing—for panfish, bass and pickerel—often takes second place to maneuvering the boat for a wildlife photo or gazing through binoculars.

In summertime the woods are beautiful to look at, but it's easier to see the trees than anything else. In the green confusion, wildlife gets lost, at least to me. To see wildlife, it's best to go where there's an opening plus an attraction: to the water. Besides, over these next few months, that's also the coolest place to be.



# Outdoor Wildlife Learning

By Bill Einsig



## Nesting Boxes

**J**UST AS every school needs textbooks, chalkboards and gym equipment, they also need bird nesting boxes. That might sound a bit radical but nesting boxes are extremely versatile teaching tools that connect classroom learning to the real world.

Nest boxes have been put to good use by creative teachers in too many ways to list here. It would include, however, experiences in fine arts, language arts and social studies, in addition to obvious connections to science curricula. Instead, I'll assume you agree nesting boxes are great additions to the school campus and simply outline a practical method of establishing a trail of boxes easily and inexpensively with "kid power."

First, let's break the total project into a series of six steps: Motivation, Box Construction, Erection, Painting, Numbering, and Monitoring. Each step involves about one hour, or less, of student time, assuming some adult has carefully prepared for the work students will be expected to do. For that reason, each of the six steps is divided into two sections: "Get Ready" to help you plan and prepare and "Action" to give a brief idea of what students will actually do.

### MOTIVATION — 1 Hour

**Getting Ready:** Plan this lesson to introduce students to the plight of the eastern bluebird and other cavity nesters. One of the best introductions I've seen, and one I use frequently, is "Where Have All the Bluebirds Gone?", a 35mm slide program produced by the North American Bluebird

Society, Box 6295, Silver Spring, MD 20906-0295. It's a complete description of the bluebird's problems, predators and the potential of artificial nesting sites.

Most areas also have experts willing to visit a class and talk about the needs of cavity nesters. It's important to stretch the concept to include species other than bluebirds. Kids will get excited about nests, eggs and young of all birds with little real preference to bluebirds. That's why a trail designed for a variety of species can be so educationally useful.

**Action:** Conduct your introductory lesson so students become both informed and excited. That's not hard to do because this is a real opportunity for kids to get involved, firsthand, with a species in trouble. No matter how much they learn about Bengal tigers, bald eagles or California condors, they are not likely to get as directly involved with those exotics as they can with animals searching for nest sites on school property. What a fantastic opportunity.

### CONSTRUCTION — 1 Hour

**Getting Ready:** Parent-teacher groups are usually willing to pay for the few building materials students will need. This is my shopping list for 10 nesting boxes:

- 10 pcs 1"x6"x6' pine boards
- 10 pcs 2"x2"x8' oak posts, rough cut
- 1 lb 6d, coated sinker nails
- 10 1/4"x3 1/2" carriage bolts with washers and wing nuts

The total cost comes to less than \$50 and



### Question

Are baits for trapping still legal under the new Game and Wildlife Code?

### Answer

Yes, when trapping, if you are using meat or animal products as the bait, it must not be visible from the air.

some suppliers will make free deliveries to your school.

Cut the pine boards into one-foot sections, five per box, and bottoms measuring four inches. All cuts are cross cuts and all pieces (front, back, sides and top) are the same. Measure the bottom width carefully because the actual width of a six-inch board varies slightly among suppliers.

Cut all the pieces before the final assembly. You could drill the 1½-inch entrance holes and ¾-inch mounting holes in the backs before assembly, but I prefer to do both after the boxes are assembled to reduce confusion caused by the many pieces.

*Action:* On the day of assembly, students should be divided into ten teams with each team sharing a hammer. Demonstrate how the pieces fit together, then distribute wood and nails.

Build boxes on a solid floor rather than on desks or tables. There will be less noise and it's easier to hammer on the solid surface.

First nail through the back into the sides. Then add the bottom and finally the front. The roof is attached with a single nail in a rear corner, so it can pivot open in this "top opening" style.

If the entrance and mounting holes have not been drilled, do it now and tell each team to initial their creation.

## ERECTION—30 Minutes

*Getting Ready:* Before students can

hang their boxes, posts must be set. Cut the 8-foot oak to a length allowing 12 to 18 inches below ground and 3 to 5 feet above ground. Pointed posts will be easier to set.

You're likely to get many opinions about how high to place the boxes. I like to hang them low so youngsters can easily look into them. I know there are disadvantages to erecting boxes so low but, for me, the kids come first.

Choose ten sites around your school for the posts. It's often impractical to space boxes 100 yards apart, as most bluebirders recommend. But remember, you're building a nesting trail for various birds—not just bluebirds. One of the local experts may help you choose sites, but you'll have to be patient with most of them because they'll be prone to disagree with the often crowded arrangements you'll be forced to accept. Compromise and hope for the best. As far as the kids are concerned, a single nest of any kind will make the whole project a success.

*Action:* After the posts are drilled (¾-inch hole at top) and set, student teams should hang their boxes on the posts assigned to them. I like to hang the boxes on a single bolt and run scrap wire through two holes near the bottom of the back and around the post, with just a twist or two to keep the box from swinging. Two bolts require more accurate drilling and more care in construction.

## PAINTING—45 Minutes

*Getting Ready:* Gather water-base paint or stain, ten small paint brushes (about 2 inches) and ten coffee cans. Be sure students are dressed for a messy painting experience and plan for hand washing and general clean up.

*Action:* Give each team a can of paint, a brush and let them go to it. My best advice is to stay far away from any student with a brush. Even then, paint will seem to jump from everywhere onto your own coat, pants and shoes.

## NUMBERING—30 Minutes or Less

*Getting Ready:* Each box must be identified by its own number. All collected data will be correlated to this number so it should be clear and permanent. Students can use stencils to paint the number on the box or they can do it free-hand with black paint and an artist's brush. The usual place for the number is on the front



under the hole. Don't put it on the lid because that will be the piece most likely broken, lost and ultimately replaced.

**Action:** Give each team a small amount of paint, a brush and send them to the boxes. As an alternative, a few chosen students could complete this step for all boxes. It takes only a few minutes to number each box and some teachers might not want to get the whole class involved with ten brushes and ten paint cans when one of each could do the job just as well.

### MONITORING—30 Minutes Per Week

**Getting Ready:** It's always tempting to skip on this last step, But it's actually the most important of all. Teachers who prepare data forms and organize the class into monitoring teams collect systematic data during the nesting season that can be of real scientific value.

The Bureau of State Parks uses report forms to coordinate data collection from nesting boxes across the state. Contact the Environmental Education and Interpretive Section, Nolde Forest, R.D. 1, Box 392, Reading, PA 19607 for copies of their forms.

The Game Commission also provides data forms to active nest box enthusiasts participating in their Cavity Nester Co-operators Program. You can get a copy of those forms, which correlate habitat type to box use, from the Bureau of Wildlife Management, Pennsylvania Game Com-

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mission, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.

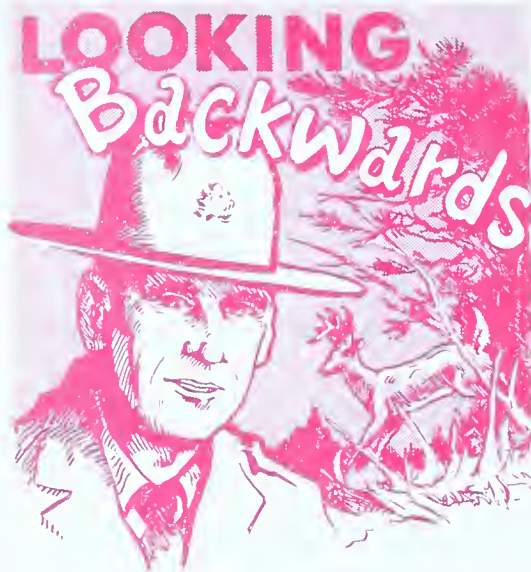
**Action:** Organize your class to monitor the boxes once each week. Demonstrate the proper methods to examine the boxes so disturbances are held to a minimum. Again, your local expert may be able to help out with this training—and with one more big job!

What happens when school ends? Students who live near the school may volunteer to continue monitoring during the summer nesting period. Too often, however, they soon lose interest. A local adult birder who agrees to check the boxes for the class, and thereby provide a more complete data record, is invaluable.

Monitor the boxes at weekly intervals from early April to the end of school. The student teams can take turns walking the trail each week, or each team can be responsible for monitoring just their own box. I prefer the first method because it gives every student the chance to check boxes with active nests even if their own box remains empty.

### New Big Game Records Book

Pennsylvania's deer and bear harvests have attracted nationwide attention for many years, so more than two decades ago the Game Commission began measuring whitetail racks and bear skulls and collecting this data into permanent records. From 1965 through 1986, nine official statewide measuring programs were held. Thousands of deer and hundreds of bears were measured, using the internationally recognized Boone and Crockett system so that hunters could see how Pennsylvania trophies compared with those taken anywhere in North America. Results of these individual scoring sessions were reported in GAME NEWS. Now we have produced a 216-page hard cover book, *Pennsylvania Big Game Records, 1965-1986*, integrating the scores of all nine programs into one master list. Also included are the stories of dozens of the successful hunts, along with hundreds of trophy photos and related material. *Pennsylvania Big Game Records* can be ordered now from the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797. Price is \$10 delivered.



**By Bill Bower**

**Wildlife Conservation Officer  
Bradford County**

**E**VERY SPRING, wildlife officers across the state become foster parents for young wildlife picked up by well-meaning people. In nearly every instance, however, these young should not have been picked up. I don't know how many times people have brought young robins to my home. "They fell out of the nest," they invariably say. If people only knew that young robins leave the nest before they can fly, they wouldn't pick them up. The young flutter down to the ground, where the male then takes care of them while the female begins the task of building another nest. True, that's a very dangerous time for young robins, a lot of them do not survive. Cats, dogs and other wildlife take their toll, but that's nature's way. Anyone picking up a young robin automatically sentences it to death. Young animals that are picked up either die, or they may have to live out their lives in a cage. Sometimes people like to make pets out of wildlife. There's no denying wildlife babies are cute. But just like puppies and kittens, they grow up. Sometimes they get mean. Sometimes people tire of them, then think they can simply release them into the wild. These so-called "pets" then become problems for someone else. I could tell many stories about people who made pets out of wildlife. Most of these stories

have sad endings. Well, what should you do if you find a young animal and you think it needs help? Contact the local district wildlife officer or one of his deputies. If the animal really needs help, it won't go far. So let the trained officer make the decision whether or not to pick it up. Sometimes these animals do need help. I have two incidents I want to tell you about, both dealing with bears. You might say these are the "bear facts."

The first story occurred on a weekend trip with my two sons and one of their friends. We had stayed at a cabin on South Mountain. We broke camp and were heading home when one of the boys yelled, "There's a bear!" I stopped and we watched a small bear start to run across an open area. Then, all of a sudden, the bear stumbled and fell. It got up and started to run, only to fall again. It was then I remembered talking to John Booth, the Northeast Land Management Supervisor. John had told me he had seen an injured bear on SGL 12. He said it appeared to be in pretty bad shape. I watched as the bear struggled to get up a bank. I jumped out of the vehicle and ran after it. Of course, I was immediately followed by three boys. We had no problems catching the bear. It simply couldn't get up the bank. The bear weighed about 40 pounds. I got behind it, grabbed it by the back of the neck, and picked it up off the ground (a feat I would not try with a healthy bear). Even so, it was still quite a handful. I examined the bear but could not find any apparent wounds, so I released it. The bear ran and fell again. It was then I decided the bear needed help. I grabbed it again, but by now we were quite a way from the vehicle, and I wasn't sure how to get it back there. We finally decided to take our belts off, loop them around the bear's neck, and then lead him back. When we got there, we put him in the back of the vehicle. At that point the boys felt they were in the same class as Daniel Boone, having brought a bear back alive.

My youngest son, Scott, decided the bear was hungry, so he got some of our leftover food and started to feed him. I said, "Scott, he won't eat anything." That's how much I know. The bear ate everything he was given.

We took the bear home and called a Game Commission biologist. He came and took the bear to the Penn State deer pens. I learned later that the bear suffered from dislocated hips. They were set and



the bear was later released into the wild.

The second story began on a Sunday afternoon. My family and I had just returned home from a picnic with some friends when a car drove into my driveway. Two local boys jumped out and one said, "Mr. Bower, we just picked up a bear that was hit by a car."

They opened the trunk and showed me a bear, one about 100 pounds. They said they had stopped earlier, but I was not home, so they decided to go back and get the bear. They were glad I was home now. They didn't know what they were going to do if I hadn't been home.

Well, the bear was more dead than alive. Had I not had a yard full of kids running around and wanting to know what I was going to do with the bear, I probably would have taken the bear out and put it out of its misery. But I told the kids I would take it to the vet. So I contacted Dr. Elliott. He treated the bear for shock, wired its broken jaw, and fed it nourishing fluids intravenously. A series of x-rays showed the bear had spinal cord damage, a broken nose, and a cracked shoulder. The prognosis for his recovery was not good, to say the least.

I took the bear home, expecting to find it dead the next morning. I didn't. For the next several days I had to roll the bear over every two hours so it would not develop pneumonia, and I had to continue giving it fluids. About the fourth day, a friend heard about the bear and stopped over. Dr. Duane Danko, a chiropractor, looked at the bear. At that time it was paralyzed from the neck down. He said he thought he could do the bear some good, so he set about treating it, snapping and cracking its bones.

The next day the bear started to show

some signs of improvement. It started eating dog food softened in water. During the next six days Dr. Danko gave the bear daily treatments, one day he came twice.

The bear continued to improve, and in a few days he was able to stand, although somewhat shakily. His injured shoulder caused his paw to roll over onto the knuckles. From that point on, his progress was remarkable. He gained strength every day. I had the bear inside one of our culvert traps, which I was using as a cage. I let him out from time to time for exercise and to clean the cage. To get him back inside, I grabbed him by the back of the neck and led him into the cage. It wasn't long before Mr. Bear didn't want to go back in the trap. He would curl up his lip and huff at me. The last time I let him out of the cage I knew I had made a mistake. I didn't think I was ever going to get him back inside so I called Arnie Hayden, a Game Commission biologist. He came and tranquilized the bear and put some ear tags on it. The next day Mr. Bear and I took a trip. I released him in the same area he had been found. I checked the area several times to see if he needed any more help, but I never saw him again. Although he was tagged, I have never learned what happened to him.

These two stories have happy endings. I remember them simply because they do. Most of my dealings with young and injured wildlife have sad endings. I could tell you stories of so-called "tame" wild animals which have injured people, tame crows which ended up scaring people and, consequently, getting shot, and even tame deer that caused neighbors to start fighting. But those are all stories I'd sooner forget. Just remember: Leave wildlife in the wild!



**VAN POPP**, Harrisburg, dropped this 146-pound 8-point trophy in Dauphin County during last year's archery season. Hunting partner **Pete Kohl**, right, is equally proud of Van's success.

# Thornapples



*Chuck Fergus*

**T**HE STREAM bisected the farm, twisting through the fallow fields. We walked on grass pressed down by its own dying weight and by the year's first frosts. Dave Putnam bent and peeled back a mat of grass, exposing a tunnel network. "Meadow mice," he said. "They spend most of their time under the grass where the owls can't get them."

Putnam is a biologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In his late 30s, he has graying hair and a softness about his middle that belie what seems to be an undrainable well of energy. (Upon reading the preceding sentence he suggested I change it to: "In his late 30s, he has graying hair and is strong, smart, devious, charming, quick, athletic, a good wing shot, and an all-around good guy.")

"The Farmers Home Administration owns this farm," he told me. "It will be sold at auction. But before the sale, we have a chance to recommend restrictions on the deed, to build in a little protection for this wetland."

It didn't look like much of a wetland, a narrow stream dug four, maybe five feet below the floodplain. Putnam pointed toward the bank. "Muskrat burrow." The hole was just at water level. He showed me muddy trails, droppings on a log, bright verdant patches where the muskrats had cropped the forage golf-green close.

Farther on we found a wood turtle

lying against the bank, in a soft spot where it could dig in and outwait the winter to come. Three bluebirds flew out of a cavity in a snag; perhaps the last of several broods to have been raised in the hollow tree.

Putnam said he would recommend as a deed restriction a 25-foot zone on each side of the stream, where cows could not graze away the groundcover and pollute the water with manure, where a tractor could not extend a strip of corn. "Think about it," he said. "Fifty percent of wheat, 35 percent of corn, and 35 percent of soybeans grown in this country last year were surplus. And yet we're still draining wetlands to put more land into crops."

It is with such matters—draining a marsh to plant corn, filling in a wet spot to make a parking lot, flooding a bog to create a resort lake—that Putnam and the nine other biologists in his State College, Pa., office are concerned.

It is illegal to alter wetlands without first getting state and federal permission. That stipulation represents a huge change in the attitude our society has taken over the last 300 years.

Wetlands have long been suspect terrain. They were considered wastelands, inhabited by noxious and dangerous creatures—biting flies, bears, poisonous snakes. The word "heathen" comes from "heath": a moor, a type of wetland found across Europe and Britain, where, presumably, godless savages dwelt. When the colonists came to the New World, they brought with them these negative views. Typical is the reaction of Colonel William Byrd when, in the 17th century, he surveyed and named the Great Dismal Swamp on the North Carolina-Virginia border: "a horrible desert, the foul damps ascend without ceasing, corrupt the air and render it unfit for respiration. . . . Never was Rum, that cordial of Life, found more necessary than in this Dirty Place."

For two centuries the settlers pretty much avoided wetlands, except to reap the bounty of waterfowl and other



game they sustain. Then, as technology increased, there began an assault that has continued to this day. The congressional Swamp Land Acts of the mid-1800s put 65 million acres into private hands in the South, Midwest, and West. In many of these swamps, the timber was cut and the land drained and put into farm production. Until recently the government encouraged wetlands "reclamation" (the audacity of the term is astounding) by subsidizing draining and filling: a farmer casts a covetous eye on that marsh down by the river, fine, the Soil Conservation Service would help, and soon it would be soybeans and corn, not ducks and cattails and flood control.

### 458,000 Per Year

From the mid-1950s to the mid-1970s, we lost an average of 458,000 wetland acres each year. Six million of forested wetlands, 4.7 million of inland marshes, 400,000 of shrub swamps, 400,000 of coastal marshes and mangrove swamps: more than 11 million acres, an area twice the size of New Jersey. (While the damage was mounting, hunters, from 1934 on, were paying to preserve 3.5 million acres of wetlands by buying federal "Duck Stamps" — permits for waterfowl hunting.)

In the 1960s and 1970s, people began waking up. They started to realize the value of wetlands in nurturing wildlife, soaking up floodwaters, cleansing polluted water, and providing solace for souls that see too much of cultivation and pavement, of sameness and tameness.

In 1972 Congress passed the Federal Water Pollution Control Act; Section 404 of the Act is administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, to "regulate discharges of dredged or fill materials into U.S. waters" — to judge whether water quality, fish and wildlife resources, and aesthetic values would be harmed by any project proposing to fill wetlands, and then to issue, or deny, a permit. The Corps was required to accept the advice of the

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and of state fish and wildlife agencies. And the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was granted veto power over any project okayed by the Corps.

Since 1972 the Corps of Engineers has balked at its responsibilities and has been ordered by the courts, following suits by environmental groups, to enforce the law. In 1977 President Carter issued an executive order outlining a strong national policy for preserving wetlands, and prohibiting federal agencies, including the Soil Conservation Service and the Corps of Engineers, from destroying wetlands with any projects that use federal funds.

According to "Mid-Atlantic Wetlands: A Disappearing Natural Treasure," published in June 1987 by the EPA and the Fish and Wildlife Service, Pennsylvania lost 6 percent of its wetlands between 1956 and 1979. In those years, 28,000 acres were destroyed. An increase in pond acreage was the single largest cause: 38 percent of wetland loss. Urban sprawl consumed 14 percent, agriculture ate up 17 percent, lakes inundated 8 percent, and other development (including stream channelization and peat mining) caused 23 percent of the loss. The northern



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## **GAME NEWS**

**For a Friend . . .**

Pocono region saw the worst attrition, losing 15 percent of its wetlands.

In 1979 Pennsylvania lawmakers passed Act 70, the "Dam Safety and Encroachment Act," directing the state Department of Environmental Resources (DER) to monitor the destruction of wetlands. Today, if a developer wants to drain a marsh for a housing subdivision, he must apply for a permit from the DER. If the developer wishes to fill in a bog and extend buildable land to a lake, the application goes to the Corps of Engineers. (The federal government regulates filling, while the state has jurisdiction over both filling and draining.)

### **Best in the Country**

Putnam notes that Pennsylvania is one of only a handful of states to have its own wetlands regulations. "Pennsylvania's law is one of the best in the country," he says. "Unfortunately, DER doesn't have the manpower to adequately enforce the act. At present, three biologists based in Harrisburg monitor wetlands development; there are six field engineers, and wetlands protection is only one of their duties." Putnam and his Fish and Wildlife service colleagues have given courses and field training to DER personnel. He adds, "I'd like to see a couple of trained ecologists in each of the six DER regional offices, working strictly on wetlands."

Putnam is on the road several days a week, inspecting proposed projects and documenting damage from illegal ones. Often he encounters angry landowners. They ask, "How were we supposed to know it was a wetland?" He answers, "How were you supposed to know there wasn't a lien against the property when you bought it, or that

it had access or would pass a perc test for a septic system?" When people ask about wetlands before buying a parcel of land, Putnam suggests they hire an engineering firm, a soils expert, or a consulting biologist.

If a landowner says, "It's my land and I should be able to do what I want with it," Putnam replies that a person who buys a lot in town cannot raise pigs in the back yard, or open a junkyard, or not bother to shovel snow off the sidewalk; just as a town passes zoning ordinances for the good of the majority, nations and states enact laws to the same end.

"A lot of people think their one little project won't cause any harm," Putnam says. "But it's cumulative. A half-acre here and a quarter-acre there, and pretty soon we're talking about hundreds and then thousands of acres lost."

When Putnam or another biologist finds an illegal fill, the law requires the offending landowner to remove the fill and restore the habitat. Or, the landowner may be allowed to "mitigate": to create replacement wetlands elsewhere. Mitigation can be expensive, up to \$50,000 per acre, and it doesn't always work. If the landowner refuses to undo damage, a fine can be levied.

"In parts of the state," Putnam says, "the Fish Commission's Waterways Conservation Officers are doing a great job of protecting wetlands. Under the Fish and Boat Code, a permit from DER is needed before altering a stream or filling a wetland. Violators can be fined \$2500 for each offense. Jim Carter, an officer in Erie County, is tough on wetlands fillers. Over the last several years he's collected thousands of dollars in fines." A violation of this section of the Fish and Boat Code is a misdemeanor, Putnam notes, which means fingerprinting, a mug shot, and a permanent criminal record. "Wetland fillers really pay attention when they hear their Miranda rights read to them."

Each month, representatives from the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Corps of Engineers, EPA, DER, and



the Game and Fish Commissions meet to review proposed projects in Pennsylvania. Most projects discussed are large ones that have come before the DER and the Corps of Engineers. Many smaller projects are never reviewed: because people don't apply for the required permits, the projects slip through unnoticed. Like the housing development that fills a seasonal pond where spring peepers used to breed, or the farmer who ditches out a brushy wet spot which before had shielded pheasants from the winter wind.

What can we as citizens do to help save wetlands? First, we can educate ourselves. (Refer to the "Sources" section following this article.) Armed with facts, we can inform local officials—township supervisors, county planners, state representatives—about what wetlands are, their many values, and our concern for protecting them. We can join organizations that buy wetlands. Or we can purchase our own: the late Ned Smith, for many years a regular contributor to GAME NEWS, bought his beloved Cumming's Swamp, where he had watched and sketched wildlife for much of his life.

We can report illegal drains and fills. "Use common sense," Putnam says. "Does the project have to be located in a wetlands? If it's a marina, say, it probably does. A shopping center?—I doubt it. If you see somebody just dumping fill in a wetlands, especially a small wetlands like a forest pond or a wet meadow, very likely a permit hasn't been obtained. Contact us [the Fish and Wildlife Service], DER, the Corps of Engineers, or your local Wildlife or Waterways Conservation Officer. Often, little fills can be removed before they cause too much harm.

"We're not out to see people fined or to make life difficult for them. What we want is to prevent damage. Because once a wetland is filled, something special is lost. Even if the fill is taken out and the habitat restored, at the very least we've lost those years of fish and wildlife productivity, of water renova-



tion, of flood control, that the wetland would have been providing.”

The day Putnam and I checked the lazy stream on the fallow farm, we also visited an experimental potato farm. I was worried that the potato farm had expanded into a boggy stand of alders where I had hunted woodcock several years earlier. Putnam brought a spade, to overturn soils, if need be, and check if they were wetlands that had been drained. Fortunately the wetlands had been spared: we found the alders, if not

the woodcock, and I made a mental note to come back later when flight birds might be in. Putnam, true conservationist that he is, employed his spade in digging small holes, in each of which he planted the orange-red fruits of a mountain ash (ruffed grouse eat the berries) that we had found growing on the edge of the swamp.

(This is the second part of a two-part article.)

## Sources

David Putnam and his co-workers welcome information on suspected illegal wetland draining and filling. They may be contacted at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 315 S. Allen St., State College, PA 16801; telephone (814) 234-4090.

To learn about wetlands, request “Mid-Atlantic Wetlands, A Disappearing National Treasure,” by Ralph W. Tiner, Jr., from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region III, Office of Public Affairs, 841 Chestnut Building, Philadelphia, PA 19107. An information sheet, “Wetland Protection in Pennsylvania,” outlines the history of wetland legislation; it is available from the League of Women Voters, Strawbridge & Clothier, 8th and Market Streets, Philadelphia, PA 19105.

The Nature Conservancy buys wild lands, including many wetlands, to ensure their permanent protection. To date the Conservancy has set aside over 2.6 million acres in 50 states, Canada, Latin America, and the Caribbean; lands are managed as preserves by the organization or transferred to other conservation groups, both public and private. (Several Pennsylvania tracts have been conveyed to the Game Commission.) For member-

ship information, contact The Nature Conservancy, 1800 North Kent St., Arlington, VA 22209.

Citizens can help save our remaining wetlands by buying Federal “Duck Stamps” at local post offices or national wildlife refuges; a new stamp, currently costing \$10, is issued each year. Pennsylvania’s own annual duck stamp can be purchased for \$5.50 delivered (\$22 for a block of four), from the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.

Persons contemplating construction or filling activities in wetlands must obtain a permit from the Department of Environmental Resources or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. A brochure explaining the Corps’ permitting process, “Are You Planning Work in a Waterway or Wetland?”, is distributed by the U.S. Army Engineer District, Corps of Engineers, P.O. Box 1715, Baltimore, MD 21203. Permit applications are available from the Corps, and from the Division of Waterways & Storm Water Management, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources, P.O. Box 2357, Harrisburg, PA 17120. (Only one application need be submitted to cover both Corps and DER requirements.)





ARCHERS have seen dramatic equipment changes over the past 25 years, and Schuyler has been keeping GAME NEWS readers abreast of those changes, on a month-to-month basis, without fail.

**25 Years . . .**

## Silver Shaft

**By Keith C. Schuyler**

**“S**INCE MY typewriter will be following the flight of your arrows for some time to come, it might be well to start it out with some thoughts directly from the sentiments of the writer. As one who is primarily concerned with the bow and arrow as a combination for the most enjoyment in hunting, I am not unaware of the controversial aspects of this hunting sport. Nevertheless, in my opinion, there are so many positive sides to the question that the negatives are no more common or uncommon than they are in any form of hunting.”

“Meanwhile, as we go further into the subject, it will be primarily on the basis of one man’s opinions, based on

his knowledge and experience. The effort will be to inform — and to please — to the limit of the truth.”

The preceding is the first and last paragraphs from my first “Straight From the Bowstring” column that appeared under my by-line, 25 years ago. Since that time there have been many changes. Bow hunting, per se, is no longer as controversial as it was a few decades ago. Equipment changes have somewhat altered the face of archery, but fundamentals of bow and arrow handling will probably never change. Another constant is my desire to inform to the limit of the truth.

The late Thomas A. Forbes — author of “Guide To Better Archery” in 1955 —



**PHILADELPHIA** was the scene for a 1965 field tournament, above, and the 1969 World Archery Tournament, below, in which Pennsylvania's Johnny Williams, who later became world champion, came in second.



penned a column about the sport in **GAME NEWS** for 12 years, beginning in 1951, concurrent with the first bow hunting season in Pennsylvania. Later, it was George H. Harrison, then editor of this magazine, who challenged me with the task. My inaugural column appeared in July, 1963.

Part of my assignment included providing at least five appropriate photos to complement my copy. That meant being on the scene, or conjuring ideas that would appeal to everybody interested in archery—target shooters and hunters—and covering everything that comes from the bowstring, including the string itself.

To provide proper coverage, within my own definition, also requires con-

siderable traveling over the state. In one instance, I made a round trip of 80 miles just to get the answer to one question that appeared here as a single sentence.

It has been interesting to observe, over the 25 years since my first column, that the basics required to shoot a bow have changed little. That's not surprising, though. Actually, shooting basics were first spelled out in English by Roger Ascham, in his *Toxophilus*, published in 1545. But, equipment has changed. Oh how it has changed.

Although the principle of the compound bow had been developed by Dr. Claude J. Lapp in 1938, it wasn't until 1963, about the time my first column appeared, that Hollis W. Allen built the first one. He claimed unheard of speeds, but declined my request for an affidavit. Nevertheless, the popularity of compound bows took off when Tom Jennings started building them in draw weights suitable for hunting. Even so, it wasn't until 1973, when compound bows were first legalized for hunting in Pennsylvania, that they became popular here.

Meanwhile, archers were using what they thought was just fine, the recurve bow that was developed after World War II. It nudged aside the English longbow that had been the mainstay of both American target archers and the relatively few bow hunters around prior to the war. It is interesting to note that, writing in 1926, Dr. Robert P. Elmer described a composite bow and a recurve bow as being the same, "A bow of three layers, usually with a sinew back, wood centre (sic) and horn belly." He was referring to oriental bows, for the most part, and the ancient principle was not widely developed in this country. Rather, the recurve of the now laminated flat bow evolved from a primarily cosmetic effect to a full-blown working addition to the limbs.

Manufacturers of target bows, and there were a host of them, using input from target archers, developed the recurve bow into a fine shooting ma-



chine. Bow hunters, most of whom were also target archers, benefited greatly from the improvements. The recurve's configuration putting the arrow rest on the bow's center line improved accuracy, and working recurves enhanced speed and smoothness in release.

But as the compound bow increased in popularity in the early 1970s, a number of established recurve companies fell behind and were lost in the change-over. In a few years, sales of compound bows accounted for 95 percent of the market.

### Fiber Glass Arrows

Although wooden arrow shafts survived WWII, fiber glass arrows were developed in 1957, and by 1962 they were replacing wood in quivers, particularly for hunting, because of their toughness. Jim Easton began experimenting with aluminum arrow shafts in 1941, but the war allowed him only enough aluminum to continue his experiments. By 1948, though, his tubing was being purchased by several archery companies. Aluminum arrows quickly became a favorite of target archers, but cost and early tendencies to bend easily did not endear them to hunters. Soon, however, more widespread distribution brought the price down to a level comparable to wood and fiber glass, and harder alloys improved survival rates for arrows that missed their targets.

An important innovation of the 1960s, in addition to improvements in broadheads, was the Converta-Point, developed by Fred Bear over a four-year period. Common today, the screw-in adapter for arrows made it possible to change arrowheads from target to field to broadhead points with just a few twists of the wrist. In fact, many improvements in archery equipment that are taken for granted today

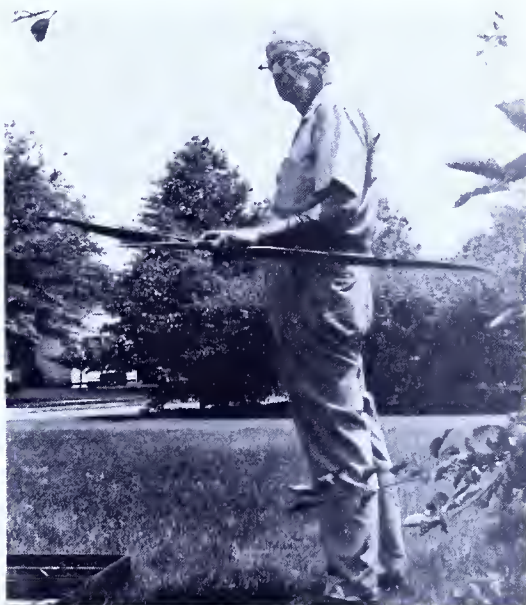
**TOM FORBES**, author, civil engineer and World War I veteran, became the first **GAME NEWS** archery columnist in 1951. He held the post until 1963.

## STRAIGHT FROM THE BOWSTRING

are the outcome of trial and error and field testing over a long period.

Despite the many improvements that have accompanied the growth of archery, there is still a sizable number of archers who stayed with or returned to the more primitive challenges of the longbow and the recurve. Longbowmen, who cannot compete against even the recurve on the target line, but are sufficiently expert with the modern version of the English arm in the field, still face some of the restrictions incidental to their choice. As with those who shoot target with the recurve bow under regulations of National Archery Association, such terms as arrow spine and fistmele continue to have special meaning. Strings are frequently made by the archer himself.

Those who have succumbed in part, or in total, to the compound bow are more likely to depend upon charts or manufacturers' recommendations for specialized strings, cables, and wheels that hold together their efficient but unlovely contraptions. Various "im-





**ALTHOUGH** the compound bow has replaced the recurve and the longbow, the fundamental skills necessary to score in the deer woods are still the same.

provements," such as the cam, overdraw and even new versions of the basic compound further cloud the picture.

Although improvements in equipment have raised archery target scores to a great extent, the ratio of reported kills by big game bow hunters has not kept pace. It appears that the basic skills necessary to score in hunting require a certain level of woodsmanship that cannot be significantly augmented by more efficient equipment. It appears, rather, that the same core of excellent hunters are continuing to score, though perhaps more efficiently.

From a personal standpoint, time has permitted me to be a part of each major development in Pennsylvania, from the first deer I killed with my homemade longbow. And, just as success rates among archers statewide has remained about the same over the years, my personal plateau has remained about the same through the recurve and the compound bows.

But, in my efforts to keep abreast of new information and developments, so

I can pass along such information to you, the past years have taught me much, and many of you have improved upon my knowledge.

Fortunately, there are still some 112 archery clubs in this state comprising the Pennsylvania State Archery Association. In addition, Pennsylvania F.I.T.A. serves those members who are entirely target oriented, although there is some overlap in membership. Those represent the core of organized archery. While primarily dedicated to indoor and outdoor target archery, in its various forms, most members are also hunters.

If it sometimes seems that target archery gets more space here than is justified by the number of participants, it is planned that way. In any activity, practice is the answer to proficiency. Those who attain proficiency with the bow on the target line or in field target shooting are the ones more likely to be among those who are the best qualified hunters.

My hope is to continue to see you at practice—for another 25 years.





**RUSS WHITTAKER**, Cowansville, has found a Marlin Golden 39A, topped with a Bushnell 2-8x, to be just the ticket for precision work in the squirrel woods.

## Scopes—Inside and Out

By Don Lewis

Photos by Helen Lewis

**"I** INHERITED my uncle's old Model 336A-DL Marlin 32 Special," the caller informed me. "He purchased it in the early 1950s and used it every year with good success. Around 1975 he installed a Williams 2-6x scope. Apparently, the scope is defective; the reticle isn't sharp."

"Maybe the reticle is out of focus for your eyes," I cut in. "Did you try adjusting it?"

"No. I don't know a thing about scopes."

"A scope has to be focused for the person using it. Your vision is probably different from his."

"I'm sure of that; he wore glasses and I don't."

"Loosen the lock ring on the eyepiece

and turn the ocular unit counterclockwise a half dozen turns. Look through it to see if the reticle is clearer. If it appears to be getting sharper, keep turning until it is clear and distinct. If it gets worse, turn it the other direction until it's sharp. Then screw the lock ring tight against the eyepiece."

I explained how to glance through the scope at the sky or a white wall for a second or two at a time and then look away. Staring for a longer period will give the eye time to adapt or focus on the reticle. A minute or so later, he came back on the phone and the tone of his voice told me the problem was solved. There was nothing wrong with the high quality Williams variable. It was simply that the reticle had been



E.E. Smith

**THE REVEREND** Mayo Smith, Stanford, Kentucky, thinks Bausch & Lomb's 6-24x, coupled with a Remington 700 BDL 22-250, is a good choice for varmints and range work.

out of focus for the new owner.

It's safe to say that even as late as 1948, 80 percent of all Pennsylvania big game hunters used open or iron sights. Marble's famous Buckhorn series and Lyman's Micrometer Windgauge Receiver sights dominated the deer woods during that time. Even as far back as 1903, many Model 1886, 92, 94 and 95 Winchesters, along with 1895 Marlins were wearing Model 21 Lyman Receiver sights. The open sight was perfectly adequate for hunters stalking through dense underbrush and laurel covered hillsides. Magnification wasn't needed, and the extra bulk of a scope would have been a drawback. For the most part, that type of hunting has gone the way of the butter churn.

There's been a complete turnabout during the last twenty years. I'm not far wrong in saying that today 85 percent of all Pennsylvania big game rifles are sporting scopes. The transition, however, didn't occur overnight. Many hunters were suspicious of scopes. The old saying that one bad apple can ruin a bushel certainly applies to scopes.



Some of the telescopic sights of the 30s, 40s and even into the early 60s lacked considerably in optical excellence. Some fixed power scopes prior to WWII had fine optics but were mechanically unsound for hunting conditions. Snipers used telescopic sights from the Civil War on. The Germans, with their outstanding optical tradition, were very efficient in this area in both world wars. American snipers in WWII primarily used the Weaver 330, which the military called the M73B1. In Korea and Vietnam, we had greatly improved sniper training and vastly superior scopes.

Another war-born improvement included a vastly superior synthetic lens cement. The objective, erector and eyepiece lenses of most scopes are "cemented elements" made up of several lenses cemented together. Older cements lacked in optical quality but, worse yet, would crystalize, discolor and break up with age or when subjected to extreme temperature changes. Bausch & Lomb developed a synthetic thermal-setting cement that required raising the temperature by several hundred degrees or quickly reducing it far below zero to separate the lenses.

The basic purpose of the rifle scope is to produce a bright, sharp image of the target. To do this, it must transmit a high percentage of the light coming



into the scope to the shooter's eye. Each lens in an optical system absorbs some light. Another drawback is that at each air-to-glass surface some of the light is reflected back. This reflection loss can be as much as 6 percent at each such surface. In a scope having ten air-to-glass surfaces, only about half of the light entering the scope would reach the shooter's eye. Not only is light loss a serious condition in a scope, but so are reflections (known as flares) that deteriorate image contrast. It causes what might be called a "graying" condition.

Until 1940 nothing could be done about reflection losses. Again, military needs for better optics in complicated optical systems brought about the development of an anti-reflection coating. This was a boon to the military, and it's probably a prime reason the telescopic sight has literally replaced iron sights in the hunting realm. Lens coating, as we know it now, reduces reflections from air-to-glass surfaces by amounts ranging from 65 to 90 percent.

From a layman's point of view, lens coating increases light transmission by as much as 50 percent. That's a signifi-

cant gain. Another paramount benefit is in image contrast. When internal reflections are greatly reduced, lens coating also correspondingly reduces flares, which in turn reduces the graying of the image. The end result is sharper contrast.

It's worth noting that on some less expensive scopes, only the two outer lenses are coated. Unless every air-to-glass surface is properly coated, little is gained. It's true that coated lenses can be recognized by a color, ranging from straw to purplish, but that doesn't mean much. The color is produced by refracting waves of light. It's technical, but unless a high quality hard coating material is used and installed properly, the major effectiveness and benefit of lens coating will be lost.

### To Some Extent

I've heard many hunters say a particular low quality scope was just as bright as a Leupold, Redfield or Weaver. That's true to some extent. I have been impressed with the brightness of many inexpensive scopes. But that's not the only criterion to judge a scope. Some sage once said it takes five years of hard hunting to prove a scope, and that might just be true. While all precision optical instruments, including rifle scopes, must be held to critical optical tolerances, the rifle scope must also be mechanically sound. It has to be capable of withstanding normal field use, as well as unavoidable accidents and abuse. That includes jars and jolts, high recoil, severe weather changes and those sickening crunches when a rifle is dropped or thumped against a tree.

Recoil can do as much damage as normal field use. The hammering of recoil against the lenses will eventually loosen them, unless they are mounted in such a manner that they can't move. Some scope lenses are mounted in a



**TASCO 6-24x provides great versatility on Remington 40XBR 222 used by Dave Wise, letting him select optimum power for crows at any range in winter or chucks in summer.**



BOB WISE likes Redfield's 2-7x Five Star on 7mm Remington Magnum for farm country deer hunting, but chooses the Leupold 2½ Compact on 94 Winchester for woods use.



cushioning material. After repeated high recoil, however, the cushioning material has the life hammered out of it, so to speak, and does not apply pressure against the lenses. That allows the lenses to move ever so slightly, but enough to degrade optical performance and alter the line of sight. High quality scopes have lenses mounted rigidly between metal surfaces that hold them securely, but still offer a strain-free metal-to-glass contact. They can't move, and they won't shatter under shock.

I once put an unloaded 25-06 scoped with a 6x Redfield on a stump at the edge of a steep rock-covered strip mine

spoil pile. I then inadvertently bumped the rifle, sending it sliding, rolling and clattering for over 50 feet while I watched helplessly. When I retrieved the outfit, I was sure the scope was not on the point of aim, even though I couldn't detect any serious damage other than some deep scratches. I went home immediately and cleaned the rifle thoroughly. Just to see how far off it was, I fired a 3-shot group at 100 yards. To my amazement, the rifle was right on the button. I still can't believe it.

I'm not claiming that a high quality scope is infallible, but that incident proved a top quality scope is built to withstand the rigors of hunting.

I purposely have gone into detail on the makeup of scopes. The feeling that a scope is a scope is a misleading myth. In the late 1970s, I received a frantic call from a hunter who had missed two bucks. He was sure something was wrong with his scope. The image was hazy and the metering wheels had become difficult to turn. He was in a bad fix.

I couldn't believe my eyes. A cheap variable of unknown brand, attached with what I call "pot metal" mounts, was perched on a beautiful Weatherby 300 Magnum. He was convinced scopes were pretty much alike, and admitted that it was the low price plus an internal range finding device that sealed the deal. When I literally forced the elevation wheel to turn, a tiny ribbon of aluminum wound out of the scope. The metering wheels were jammed and the scope was out of focus, possibly from the heavy recoil of the big cartridge. He took my advice and purchased a Vari-X-III 2½-8x Leupold and Leupold mounts. His scope troubles were over.

When I was installing scopes I encountered many hunters who felt a high quality scope wasn't necessary because they hunted only one or two days and were careful how they handled their rifles. That thinking has some merit, especially for older hunters who don't scour the woodlands or hunt in



severe weather. On the other side of the coin is the fact that a buck doesn't come along every day or even every season. When a hunter doesn't get a shot or misses due to a scope problem, it may be a year or two before another opportunity presents itself. That's a long time to spend condemning oneself for not using a top quality scope. It's true a high quality scope costs several times more than a scope of unknown reputation, but through the years of faithful service, the initial cost will be long forgotten.

The flu bug put me flat during the 1987 buck season, affording me only a few hours of hunting. The first morning of the antlerless season found me in McKean County, with a Ruger M-77 RSI International chambered for the old Savage 250-3000. Admittedly, the battered and scarred V-7 (2½-7x) Weaver (it has to be 15 years old) didn't enhance the looks of the sleek Mannlicher. However, the scars and worn spots were on the outside. When a sneaking doe tried darting across a pipe

line 70 yards away, the vintage Weaver was as sharp as the day it was manufactured. The target was bright and clear and the reticle sharp and black; a perfect combination that proved the old 250-3000 still demands some respect in the deer woods.

I have a strong feeling that long after I have passed from this earthly vale of tears to the just reward awaiting all gunwriters, another hunter will still be seeing a clear, sharp target through that old Weaver. That's the way it is with high quality scopes.



**THE THIRD** graders of Tinicum Elementary School, Bucks County, conducted a readathon in which over \$400 was raised and then donated to the agency's Bald Eagle Recovery Project. Southeast Region Information and Education Supervisor Mike Schmit accepted the donation, and is shown here with students Claudia Reycraft and Dana Bache.

Intelligencer/Record, Doylestown



# *In the wind*

bob mitchell



According to the National Wildlife Federation's 20th annual Environmental Quality Index, one of the most important developments of 1987 was the 8-year extension of the federal Clean Water Act. The Act not only provides \$20 billion to control water pollution, but also addresses, for the first time, nonpoint pollution—runoff from farms, lawns and parking lots, for example. The setting of new energy efficiency goals for home appliances, which account for one-quarter of the nation's electricity, was another positive development. On the other hand, acid rain and groundwater contamination continue to be major threats to human health and the environment. Concluding the report was the results of a public opinion survey that indicated 91 percent of the respondents would rather pay higher taxes than have budget deficits reduced by cutting pollution cleanup programs.

**Boy Scout troops, high school groups, Audubon clubs and other groups and individuals are helping the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources with nongame projects. The construction of over 2000 nest boxes, establishment of an owl nest box study, and the creation of a bluebird nest box trail are just a few of the valuable tasks being accomplished by the volunteers.**

Retirees of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management have recently established a nonprofit scientific and educational organization. Called the Public Lands Foundation, the group will rely on the expertise of over 1300 BLM retirees to help promote the wise use and management of public domain lands.

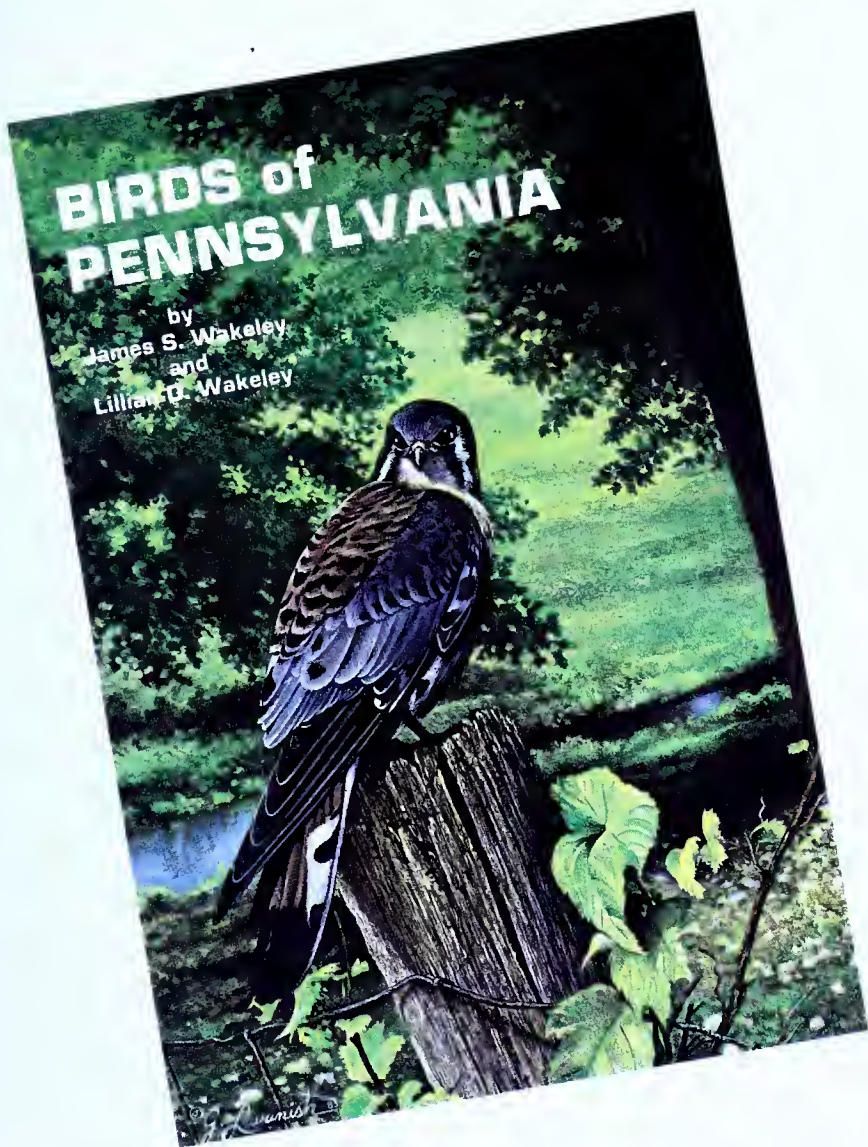
Concerns are being voiced over the wolves on Isle Royale. After reaching an all-time high of 50 in 1980, wolf numbers on the island national park have declined to 12. Moose and beaver numbers, however, the wolves' primary prey, have risen. Some researchers theorize changing prey populations may be the cause for the decline, others think disease and inbreeding may be factors. Wolves first appeared on the island in 1949, when seven crossed the ice from Minnesota or Ontario. As far as is known, all the wolves that have lived on the island ever since have been descendants of those few. When the wolf/moose (predator/prey) study began on Isle Royale in 1957, it was decided that there would be no human intervention. But because of the current decline, that decision is being reconsidered.

**The Pope and Young world record for Shiras moose may have been broken last year, when a Wyoming archer dropped a moose sporting antlers that scored, with a 55-inch spread, 185 points. The score won't become official until it's confirmed by a team of Pope and Young scorers. The current record is 180 $\frac{3}{8}$ .**

Last summer two 3-year-old Atlantic puffins became the first to return to Seal Island National Wildlife Refuge in Maine, where they had been released three years earlier in an attempt to reestablish the birds on the island. Every summer since 1984, in a cooperative project involving state, federal and Canadian officials, newly hatched puffins have been taken from their nests in Newfoundland to Seal Island and then raised in artificial burrows until becoming self sufficient. The young puffins then spend two or three years at sea before returning to land to nest. So far, 534 puffins have been released at the site, and plans call for another 200 chicks a year to be released in 1988 and 1989.

Mt. Everest, as reported in *National Wildlife*, is being cloaked in litter, the debris left behind from mountain climbers and other visitors to the world's highest peak. Of bigger concern, however, is the rate of deforestation occurring in the Himalayas. Around 120,000 acres a year are being cleared, mostly for firewood. At that rate, it's been predicted that the Himalayas will be barren in 25 years.





*Birds of Pennsylvania: Natural History and Conservation*, a completely new book by Jim and Lillian Wakeley, includes the most up-to-date information on bird biology and behavior, and the kinds of birds commonly found in the state, arranged according to the type of habitat where they are most likely to be seen. This 214-page hardcover book, supplemented with 40 full-color pages featuring the Game Commission's popular bird charts and previous GAME NEWS covers, is being sold for \$10, delivered.

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*The Wingless Crow*, by Chuck Fergus, is a collection of thirty-three Thornapples columns which have appeared in GAME NEWS. The nearly 200 pages of entertaining reading will appeal to Fergus fans as they reread these selected essays as well as to those who've yet to discover the joys of Thornapples. This top quality hardcover book costs \$10, delivered, and can be ordered from the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept AR, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.



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PENNSYLVANIA GAME NEWS (ISSN 0031-451X) is published monthly for \$6.00 per year, \$16.50 for three years, or membership in Pennsylvania's Cooperative Farm-Game Project or Safety Zone Project; to Canada and all other foreign countries, \$7.00 U.S. currency, per year. Published by the Pennsylvania Game Commission, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, Pa. 17110-9797. Phone (717) 787-4250. Second-class postage paid at Harrisburg, Pa. **CHANGE OF ADDRESS: POSTMASTER:** Send both old and new addresses to Pennsylvania Game Commission. Allow six weeks for processing. Material accepted is subject to our requirements for editing and revising. Author payment covers all rights and title to accepted material, including manuscripts, photographs, drawings and illustrations. No information contained in this magazine may be used for advertising or commercial purposes. Copyright © 1988 by the Pennsylvania Game Commission. All rights reserved.

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## Bonus Deer

**M**ILD WINTERS, consecutive annual underharvests of antlerless deer, and increases in fawn production have allowed deer populations in many counties, particularly in the southcentral and southwest regions, to rise above forest carrying capacities. Some counties have over twice the number of deer they can adequately sustain.

In an effort to better balance deer populations with habitat carrying capacities, the agency has implemented statewide the “bonus” deer system that proved so successful last year in the Southeast Special Regulations Area.

This new initiative is explained in more detail in “Conservation News.” In essence, seasons, license requirements and application procedures are exactly the same as they have been for years. The only change is that antlerless deer licenses still unsold by October 24, three weeks after going on sale, can become “bonus” deer tags.

A bonus deer tag is like an extra antlerless deer license, good only in the county where issued. It’s valid during the regular antlerless deer season and, with accompanying stamps, during the late archery and muzzleloader seasons. They’re available, while supplies last, to all hunters. The holder is entitled to hunt for an antlerless deer, even if he’s already taken a deer — either in the early archery season or in the regular antlered deer season. If he hasn’t taken a deer and also holds a regular antlerless deer license, he may take two antlerless deer. As a special consideration to black powder enthusiasts who fail to purchase a muzzleloader stamp by the cutoff date (September 30), a combination bonus deer/muzzleloader stamp can be purchased.

Bonus deer licenses will be sold by county treasurers, on a first-come, first-served basis, for \$5.50 each, the same as an antlerless deer license. The combination bonus deer tag/muzzleloader stamp costs \$11.

The agency has long held the belief nobody should be permitted to take a second deer while there are others who don’t get an opportunity to take one. The fact that many antlerless deer licenses have gone unsold in about a third of our county management units in each of the last several years, however, indicates a saturation point has been reached; that allocations are now exceeding demands. Apparently there are about 530,000 people interested in hunting antlerless deer in the state, yet annual allocations since 1985 have exceeded that number and, consequently, gone unsold.

As a result, deer managers, constrained by the single deer per hunter bag limit, lost the effectiveness of the most fundamental management tool — the hunter. The bonus deer initiative helps rectify that problem. It gives all hunters a chance to enjoy and utilize the excess deer, and appears to be the most logical, practical and equitable solution to the overabundance of deer.

Although multiple-deer seasons were considered unthinkable just a few years ago, they’ve become a reality today. Furthermore, this new initiative may be one of the first of many new opportunities Pennsylvania sportsmen will realize as the agency’s deer management program continues to become more refined and precise. — *Bob Mitchell.*





**FOX GRAPES** favor low-lying terrain. Furthermore, they are widespread and abundant. Look for the large purple grapes during the end of August and beginning of September.

## ***Fox Grapes***

**By Bill Rozday**

**M**ANY OF the wild foods introduced to outdoorsmen in the back-to-nature fervor of the 1970s prove useful only to the desperately hungry. Yet, traditional sportsmen spend time in a great variety of outdoor settings and are in a position to benefit from those wild foods that provide easy delicious meals and even income in return for a modest investment of time. Hunters and trappers often trek into the tangled and normally neglected places where the finest wild food in the East grows—the fox grape.

The fox grape suffers from blatant neglect on the part of outdoorsmen and outdoor writers. I have noted occasional references to the fruit in books dealing with nature, but there is little material that acquaints the reader with the habitat and characteristics of the plant. I

first identified fox grapes by pure inference.

While drifting along the banks of a river through the oak forests of the Piedmont region, I noticed a vine full of big grapes running above a log situated at the edge of the water. Because they were green, and because I knew of no species of wild grape that exceeded pea size, I watched over the site, anticipating a harvest of Concord-type fruit. I vaguely recalled references to a large type of sweet-tasting wild grape called the fox grape, which was reputed to favor low-lying terrain. When I returned to the vine at the end of August, I found no evidence of disturbance by fellow foragers. I had my fox grapes.

They tasted like the Concord grapes sold at the supermarket, yet they grew on that untended piece of streambank and, for

# IT'S THE LAW



## Question

Are baits for trapping still legal under the new Game and Wildlife Code?

## Answer

Yes, when trapping, if you are using meat or animal products as bait, it must not be visible from the air.

all I knew at the time, in hundreds of similar locations. I took careful note of the grape's foliage, which proved to be thick and lacking sharp indentations. A blush of orange appeared on the leaf undersides—a fox-orange color, to be specific.

## Easy to Store

After I learned to recognize the fox grape's vegetation, I found it growing along every river I examined. Each cluster contained a dozen or two of grapes with a deep purple color, sweet flavor and firm texture. That last quality makes them easy to store at home and to carry in lunches. I found them dropping into the water, going to waste because of our lack of motivation and knowledge. Because the Piedmont features a sunnier and warmer climate than the Ohio River Valley in which I lived, I held little hope of finding fox grapes at home.

I was happy, therefore, to find my skepticism totally unfounded. When I ventured into the hills of the western counties during fox grape season I found the fruit to be widespread. I have since found it in abundance in various places throughout the state during the end of August and beginning of September.

For the person unacquainted with this grape, it is crucial to spend time

along creeks, rivers and swamps at the time the fruit ripens. During other seasons, nothing distinctive about the fox grape is likely to catch the eye.

The sweet taste of fox grapes is not unique in the realm of wild grapes. A species known as the muscadine also provides fruit equivalent to cultivated varieties. The muscadine, however, reaches the northern limit of its range in southern Delaware. The fox grape, *Vitis labrusca*, grows north to southern Maine and southern Michigan, while it extends south to Georgia and Tennessee. The northern distribution of fox grape is evident in an account by Henry David Thoreau of grape-gathering in the New England countryside.

There is a season of the year other than harvest time when the fox grape makes its presence felt and, coincidentally, illustrates one of the popular mysteries of nature. Familiarity with fox grapes gives the outdoorsman access to one of the most obscure aspects of woodland life.

During June, thousands of woodland hikers breathe a sweet scent unequalled by any in the eastern forest. Few, however, know the source of the fragrance. It is a rare person who realizes it to be the scent of wild grape blossoms. Wild grape blossoms tend to hang high in the trees, and their green color is masked by the general green of a late spring woods. Though the fragrance carries little indication of the particular variety of wild grape, it illustrates the general abundance of wild grapes in Pennsylvania and opens up new localities for grape prospecting.

Those who question the economic value of foraging are simply not familiar with the fox grape. The person who finds an alder bush entwined with this species needs a bushel basket to transport the fruit. For a young person living in rural circumstances, grapes in a quantity such as that represent added income if sold at roadside stands. Each of the natural arbors found in the woods can be made to pay a good wage.

Other wild fruits—raspberries and strawberries, for example—equal their



**WILD GRAPE blossoms tend to hang high in the trees, and their green color is masked by the general green of a late spring woods. Few outdoorsmen, however, are familiar with the grape blossom's sweet scent.**

domestic counterparts in flavor, but they fail to match the fox grape in either quantity or ease of handling. Harvesting wild grapes proves as simple as shopping for the domestic varieties.

In addition to their use in meals and snacks, fox grapes make fine jelly. Their well-defined flavor remains despite the addition of sugar to the recipe.

The flavor of the fresh fox grapes equals the cultivated Concord's in quality, but it differs slightly in terms of sweetness. The sweetness of fox grapes is sufficient, but the cultivated varieties developed from this species are sweeter. Of course, either would be reckoned very sweet.

The type of outdoorsman most likely to encounter fox grapes is the trapper, who forever probes the mucky reaches of swamps in search of likely sets for raccoon or muskrat. In fact, these grapes favor wetlands to the point that some people refer to them as "swampers." They certainly enhance wildlife habitat with the food they provide, but they occur in such quantity that most of them remain on the vine.

Because fox grapes tend to drape over the understory, harvesting them presents few of the problems associated

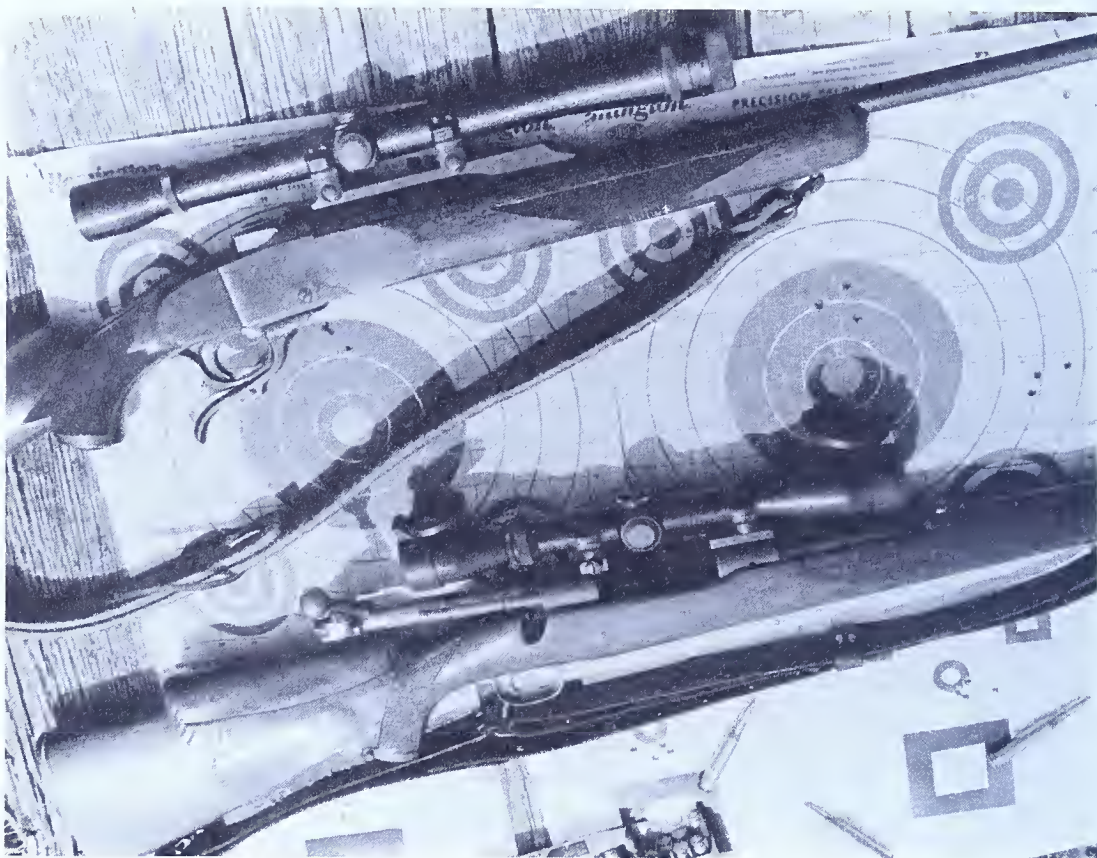


with typical wild grapes which grow in treetops. Nevertheless, the person enthused with his initial gatherings is likely to be tempted to pull down the vine or climb to an untenable perch to reach the higher-climbing fruit. Resist such impulses. When stumbling upon fox grapes, remember that there's probably a number of trees within the area offering an ample supply. The main concern of the forager should be maintenance of the vine for future years.

The fox grape demonstrates, again, that no piece of land left to nature fails to distinguish itself in some way. The fox grape also demonstrates the bounty Mother Nature offers those willing to learn her secrets.

### Cover Painting by Frank Fretz

Woodchuck hunting is a great summer pastime. The animals are found throughout the state and are most abundant in agricultural areas. Consequently, nearly every hunter in the state can find woodchucks nearby, and landowners normally welcome hunters to provide relief from the depredating rodents. The past couple of decades has found an increasing number of long-range enthusiasts, armed with modern varmint rigs topped with high-power scopes, shooting chucks at distances unimaginable just a generation ago. The sport, however, is an equally enjoyable — and beneficial — activity for hunters of all sorts. Chuck hunting provides ideal practice for big game hunting, allowing hunters valuable field experience with their big game rifles. The sport is also a great training for new hunters, even those armed with only rimfires.



THE 270 WINCHESTER is more than a great deer cartridge, it's a fine varmint round, too, and many rifles are chambered for this versatile cartridge.

## THE 270 LOAD THAT JACK FORGOT

By George H. Block, III

SWEAT BEADED on Gene's forehead as we lazed in the June sunshine and carefully watched the far hillside. Some 20 minutes passed peacefully, then the first hairy head popped up over a bare mound of fresh dirt. The chuck appeared to be nothing more than a speck when viewed with the naked eye. Heat waves danced in our binoculars as we patiently waited for the old rascal to survey his kingdom and venture forth. While some shooters claim they take them through the head at 500 yards, I have to admit I've found myself short of such marksmanship. I usually wait for the whole groundhog

to be visible, and even then I miss my share.

We were taking turns shooting and this was my shot. The Winchester Model 70 was lying on the rest at my side, bolt open, but otherwise ready for action. The chuck finally worked up his nerve and slid out of the den into the lush alfalfa. Little puffs of dust rose as I stretched out prone behind the rifle and quietly asked Gene, "How far do you think it is?"

Gene hails from the hills of eastern Tennessee and, like most southern boys, was a little slow in answering, but he finally drawled, "Well, George, if'n you



**PRACTICE** In the pastures in the summer is bound to pay off in the deer woods come late fall. A hunter can never get too much field experience with his big game firearm.

said it was a mite over 500 yards, I'd tend to agree with you."

Neither of us were golfers, but we had missed and taken so many chucks from these Greene County pastures that we had developed a pretty good sense of judging distances. Holding what appeared to be about 30 inches over the groundhog and slightly into the mild breeze, I breathed deeply and touched off the shot. The blast echoed from the valley and the muzzle rose skyward a bit, but settled back in time to allow me to witness the arrival of the bullet. A cloud of dust rose about three or four inches below my target. Stung with flying debris, the chuck wasted no time in heading for home. It was better to stay indoors and eat leftovers than to stay out and suffer from such large hailstones. Oh, well, one thing that can be said for woodchuck hunting over the pursuit of larger game, is that there will usually be another shot, and a miss spells nothing more than a chuck that will be there another day.

During that period of my life when Gene and I hunted chucks almost daily, I learned an important lesson. My old reliable 270 was more than a great deer gun, it also makes one fine varmint rifle. I learned that when one summer varmint season arrived and I found my heavy-barreled 243 was throwing shots all over the target at the rifle range. Checking it I discovered I'd shot the throat out, and it was too late to have a new tube for the season. Making do, I removed the smaller scope from my old 270, which had served me well for so many deer seasons, and replaced it with an idle Unertl 2-inch target scope. With some misgivings I worked up a lighter load and headed for the bench rest.

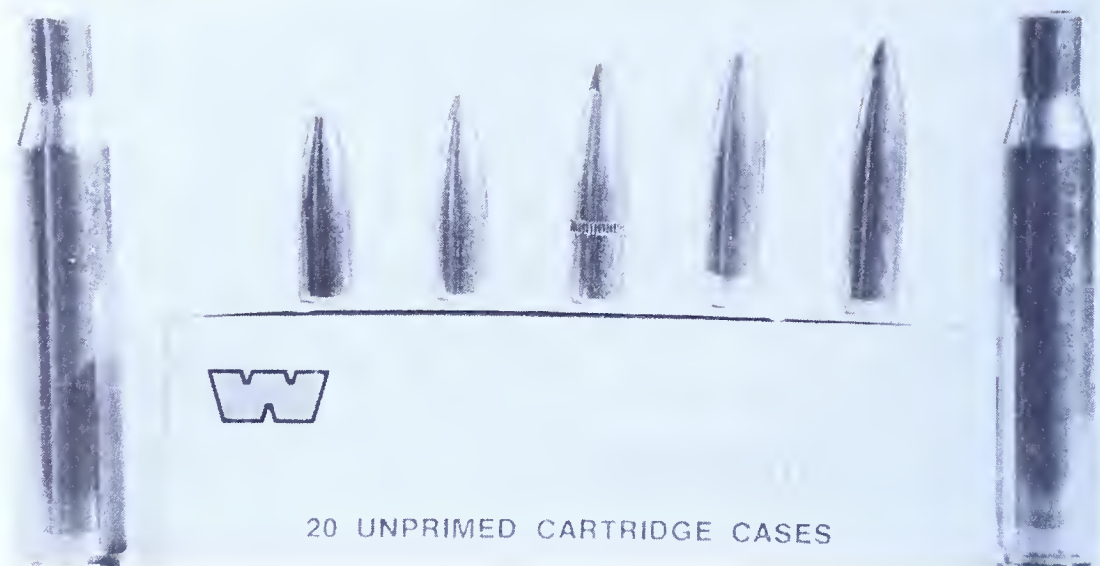
The first session was a real eye opener. With full powered loads the Model 70 would consistently keep both the 90- and 110-grain Sierras under the magic inch-mark. What surprised me



more was the performance of the 110-grain; it grouped around an inch at 200 yards. Not many heavier barreled, smaller calibered rifles will shoot as well. That long hot summer was to be the season of the 270. I made many forays into Greene County and shot a truckload of varmints. Using my deer rifle for the chucks sure improved my handling of the rifle, and my success the following December proved it.

### Jack O'Connor

No writer has been more associated with the 270 than the late Jack O'Connor. From the mountains of British Columbia to the plains of Africa, he carried the 270 and never seemed to find it wanting. Other old timers were equally fond of the caliber. John Jobson, a personal friend of O'Connor, and former camping editor of *Sports Afield*, was an advocate of this caliber as was the late Townsend Whelen. One of the greatest brown bear guides of all time, Hosea Sarber, toted a 270 as a backup when guiding for the great brown bear of the northern woods. They may exceed 1000 pounds on occasion, and are extremely powerful with a temper to match. Mr. Sarber carried a caliber he trusted to put an angry bear down for keeps. (Mr. Sarber also disappeared during a bear



**A WIDE variety of bullets is available for 270 fans. A few, left to right, are the 90-grain Sierra, 110-grain Sierra, 130-grain Hornady, 140-grain Sierra, and the 150-grain Nosler.**

hunt and was never heard from since. — Ed.)

O'Connor and Whelen often wrote of rockchuck hunts in the western mountains when the 270 was their primary tool. And even on those varmint hunting trips, the ever popular 130-grain bullet was the one these famous outdoorsmen used.

In all of my reading over the years I've found very little reference to the use of lighter bullets in the 270. It doesn't take much study of the ballistic tables in various books or loading manuals to quickly realize the potential the lighter bullets offer.

### Optimistic

Sierra's fine loading manual, for example, shows the 90-grain hollow point, which has a sectional density of .168, being moved to 3600 feet per second. While I've found most reported velocity claims to be optimistic when checked on a reliable chronograph, the reloader should have no problem attaining 3500 fps with this bullet. Incidentally, it has a better sectional than the 75-grain 257 bullets. The 110-grain 270 is shown with loads up to 3300 fps, which I have found to be realistic. That bullet has a sectional density of .205 which, while not

exceptional when compared to most big game bullets, is very good when compared to varmint bullets of other calibers. For example, the sectional density of a 55-grain 224 bullet is but .157, and the heavier than normal 63-grainer is only .179.

It has been a few years since my friend Don Spang and I headed for Greene County to get in a day of chuck hunting. While Don often took along his Remington 40X in the 22-250 chambering, I was content to carry the more portable Model 70 in 270. From 200 to 400 yards, Don's heavy-barreled varmint excelled, but no more so than the lighter 270. Beyond that range we both had problems making hits. One thing stood out, though, on the super long shots. Don would shoot while I watched as a spotter with the binoculars. At the shot he would ask, "Where did I hit?" Invariably, I would just shake my head. At the long distances the little 22-caliber, 55-grain bullet didn't move enough dirt to allow marking the shot. When the heavier 270 bullet missed the target, however, there was no mistaking where it hit. Very few shots taken at these long ranges resulted in a hit the first time. The shooter needs to fire a shot to determine range and windage



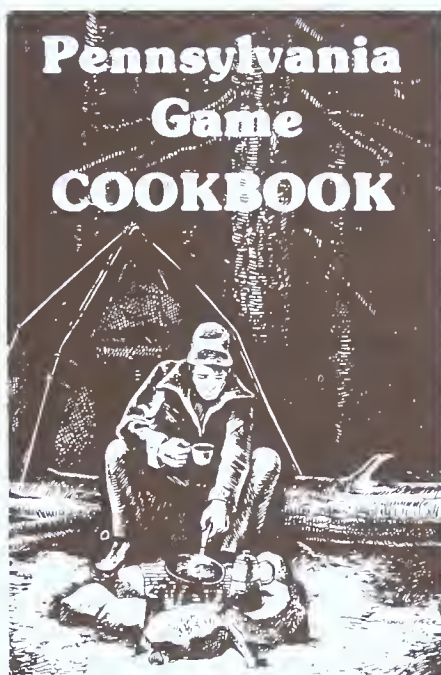
and then make the necessary corrections on subsequent shots.

After many years of groundhog hunting with many other hunters I've yet to meet the rifleman who can consistently connect on the longer shots without a test shot. On that hunt with Don, I often saw my bullets strike within inches of the targets. That made it easy to raise or lower the sighting point, or move it to the side when windage was involved. My second or third shots normally did the trick. That's why it's so important for the point of impact to be spotted.

Nothing is more frustrating to the varmint hunter than not knowing where his shot has landed. I once watched as Gene Harmon emptied two boxes of 243 ammo at a very long range chuck without once knowing where he hit. He would shoot, cuss and with clenched teeth say, "That's it! No more shots at that rascal." A few minutes later he'd say, "I just have to try one more." If he had known the spot of impact, he could have easily made the right corrections, but the little bullet and ground conditions were against him. After the 40th shot I'm sure he felt like wrapping the rifle around the nearest fencepost.

Of course, seeing the bullet strike dirt doesn't solve all the problems faced by the varmint hunter. Does the shooter exist who hasn't saved the target with the best group, possibly less than a half-inch, fired from his favorite rifle. Of course, he's probably conveniently forgotten the groups that opened up to 1 1/2 inches, or considered them flukes. Even when shooting under ideal conditions, from a solid bench with a two-point rest, a measured distance to the target, and possibly even a roof to shield the sunlight, good groups aren't easy to obtain. Considering how groups are affected by varying pressure on the cheekpiece, the grip of the right hand, and pressure on the forearm, is it any wonder few rifles can shoot inch groups in the field? Fencepost rests and shooting uphill are not conducive to shooting tight groups.

Of course, being a total rifle nut, I've never been content to do all of my varminting with one caliber. How does the



Pennsylvania Game Cookbook is a 96-page collection of delicious recipes submitted by GAME NEWS readers. It includes methods of preparing all kinds of game available in Pennsylvania, plus some recipes for moose, elk, and other species. \$4.00 delivered from GAME NEWS office.

270 stack up against the other calibers I've shot? Compared to cartridges such as the 220 Swift, it is a slowpoke at the muzzle but it does retain its velocity better than any 22. The 243 has enjoyed immense popularity in the varmint field, but when comparing it to the 270, one finds it shooting no flatter. A study of the coefficient of form of the 130-grain 270 finds it exceeds the popular 100-grain 243. Going down in bullet weight, the 110-grain bullet in the .277 diameter has an equal ballistic coefficient when compared to the 85-grain bullet from the 243. When the coefficient is the same, the velocity identical, two bullets will have identical trajectory paths regardless of caliber.

Because the heavier bullet from the

270 can be moved faster than the 100-grain bullet from the 243, actually quite a bit faster, the 270 will shoot flatter. The same can be said of the 110-grain 270, and the popular 85-grain 243 load, although to a lesser degree. When honest ballistics are studied, the 270 beats the 243 every time, and it does it with more punch.

### Closest Competitor

No discussion of long range chuck hunting with the 270 would be complete without mentioning its closest competitor, the 25-06. While I've found this large 25 caliber an interesting chambering, I've never found it to hold an advantage over the 270. The 25-06 is an extremely accurate cartridge that does its best work with heavy loads, but the same can be said of the 270. The 25-06 is fast, but so is the larger bore based on the same case. The biggest drawback of the 270 as a varmint cartridge is the recoil, but the 25-06 is not exactly a pussycat where blast and recoil are concerned. In fact, I find little difference in the blast and recoil of the two cartridges. When it comes to hunt-

ing game bigger than deer, there is no load in the 25-06 data that will come close to matching the 270, and every big game hunter would be a better shot if he also used his big game rifle for varmint hunting.

All too often the varmint hunter pays little attention to the killing ability of the bullet he stuffs in his hunting cartridge. Accuracy alone interests him, and the bullet that shoots the tightest group is the one he hunts with. Big game hunters in the know prefer accurate bullets, but also know the importance of proper bullet performance once it strikes the intended target. Because varmints are not considered trophies, not enough attention is paid to that aspect by many shooters. In my opinion, the groundhog deserves better treatment and bullets should be selected with care. The super accurate match hollow points for centerfire 22s are particularly guilty in this regard. When using such poor expanding bullets, it's common for a shooter to think he has missed, when in reality a hit has been made. Chucks often show no reaction to such bullets. The problem with many of the hollow pointed bullets is that the little opening is too small to initiate proper expansion. The few bullets that have large enough cavities up front do a poor job of bucking the resistance of the atmosphere. In most instances, I prefer the Spitzer shape, particularly in the smaller bore sizes. The expansion problem is nearly nonexistent when the larger bores such as the 270 are used.

How do the lightweight bullets perform in the 270? Well, I've never had any trouble getting 1 1/4-inch groups from the 90-grain bullet, and expansion on groundhogs is something to behold. Pushed by IMR 4350, which incidentally seems the ideal powder in the 270, there is no problem reaching velocities in the 3500 fps category. The only problem is the bullet's large open point and low sectional density. I consider it a

**GENE HARMON, an old friend of the author's, doesn't need convincing that the 270 can hold its own in the chuck fields.**





300-yard bullet, which is more than adequate for most shooters.

The 110-grain Sierra is a horse of a different color. Its excellent shape allows it to retain its velocity at extreme ranges, and I've found it to be the single most accurate bullet I've ever shot in the 270. The Nosler Ballistic Tip in the 130-grain bullet also gives excellent accuracy. While over the years I've owned a couple of 270s that shot other bullets better, most 270 rifles seem to prefer the 110-grain. There are five 270s in my gun cabinet that will keep the 110-grain Sierra in less than an inch using the maximum amount of IMR 4350. I can't say as much about other calibers I own.

The hotshot 22s have accounted for a large number of chucks over the years. The 22-250 is a splendid woodchuck caliber, as is the mistakenly maligned 220 Swift. If I had all the chucks I've taken with the 243 in a pile, it would fill the bed of a dump truck. While the 25-06 has taken fewer chucks in my hands than the others, I've shot more than a handful and appreciate its performance. Years ago on daily hunts I used the 6mm Remington, and found it

an outstanding varmint caliber, although a little finicky in the choice of loads. The old 250 Savage is a splendid little cartridge and an underrated one. I've used that caliber enough to know it is the equal of many highly praised chamberings. But when you come right down to one caliber that suits me, it's the 270. All summer long I can blaze away at distant woodchucks, and in the winter rifle season drop that buck in the far pasture. If I get the chance to hunt elk, I'll probably take the old 270, loaded with Nosler partitions.

Recently my old buddy Gene telephoned and we talked for longer than we should, and he told me he had decided to build the ultimate woodchuck rifle. The choice of barrel and action was more difficult than choosing the caliber. He knows the 270 is that good. The only mystery I find associated with the chambering is why old timers like O'Connor and Whelen overlooked the lighter bullets for the 270. While they enjoyed the many advantages of the great caliber, they also missed some. Maybe they just forgot to try the lighter bullets, but they sure missed out.

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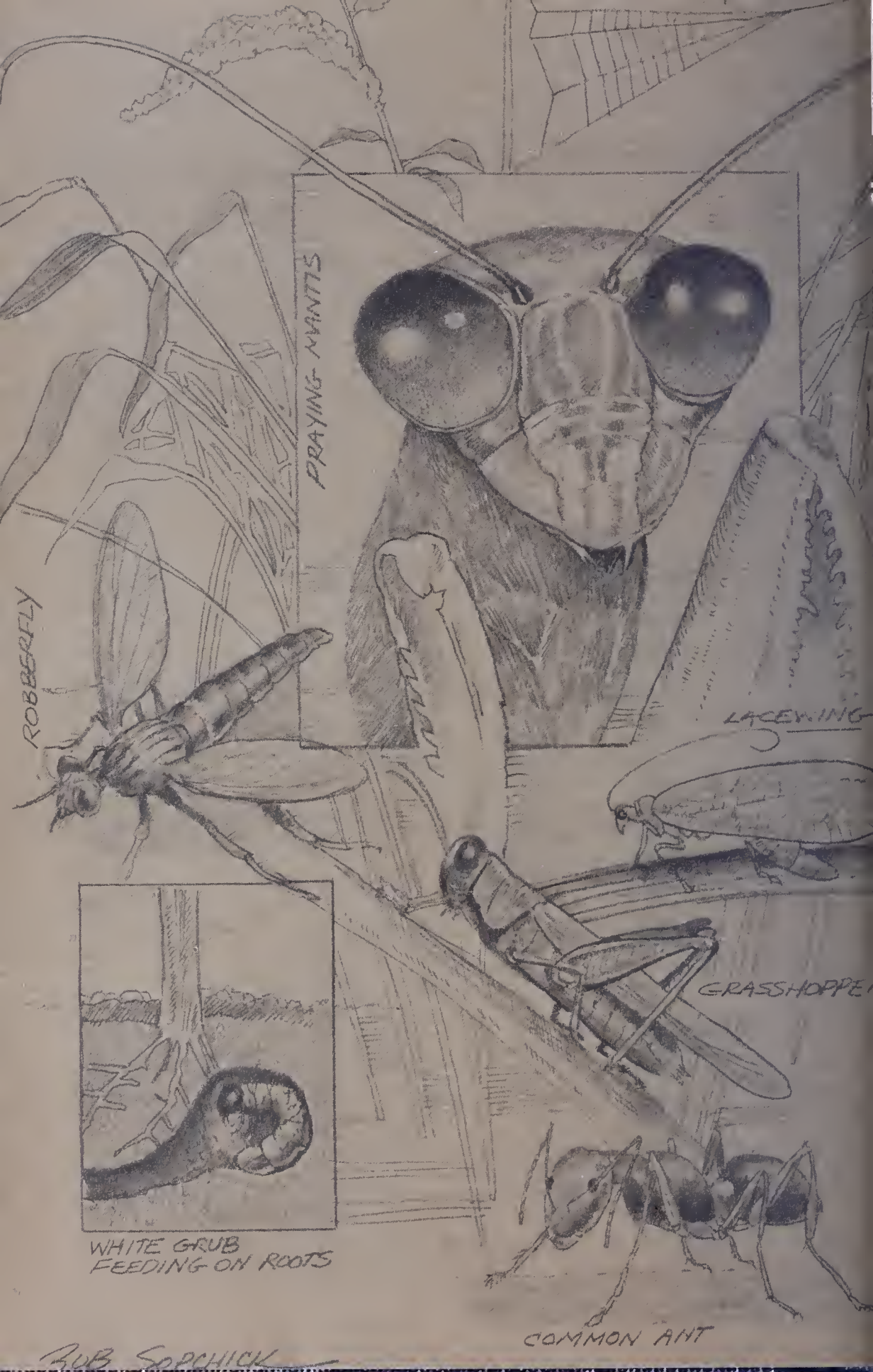
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# The Jungles of Lilliput

**T**HE LITTLE woodlot on the outskirts of town seems to shrink with each passing month as new developments nibble persistently at its edges. Deer are seen only rarely now, and the birds are leaving for parts unknown. To see anything wild I have to travel farther and farther—or so it seems.

Between the woodlot and the road is a patch of scrub, a few square yards of milkweed, knapweed, goldenrod, grasses and other typical roadside plants—a green tangle, smelling dusty under the summer sun. I've passed by the spot on every excursion into the woods. Today on my way home, however, I stop, sit down on a rock and rest.

The sun rides low on the horizon, and I become conscious of movement among the nearby stems, of sound and color, and the scintillation of tiny wings over red and yellow blossoms. I shift to get the sun out of my eyes, settle down and take a look.

Few of us seldom actually watch insects—watch them in the same way we watch birds and beasts, that is. Their lives are a kind of blur around us, a half-seen series of seemingly aimless comings and goings, an annoying buzz about our ears. Today I force myself to bring the blur into focus. What I find is that there is purpose here among the weeds, and drama as well.

As my vision adapts to the small and unfamiliar scale of life in the weed-patch, tiny animate forms take shape. Along the bunched stems, and deep among the overlapping leaves, minute bits of black and yellow and red and green resolve themselves into spiny legs, chomping jaws, waving antennae and bulging, multifaceted eyes. I find before me creatures I had only read about—creatures I had always thought

rare and exotic simply because I had never seen them. I had never seen them because I had never looked.

Little lives unfold before me. I witness brief moments of each; their beginnings and their ends remain, for the most part, a mystery. Many insects here are transients. They come, they pause, they fly off to destinations known only to themselves: honeybees, whose hive is a hollow tree in the woods; wasps, whose mud cells are plastered under the eaves of nearby houses; butterflies, bumblebees, and flies of all descriptions. The blossoms are busy with visitors. Bright metallic bodies jostle one another for position; tongues are unfurled to probe for pools of nectar; clawed feet clamber over soft petals, coating themselves with pollen. An insistent buzzing fills the air.

## Cradle to Grave

Other species pass from cradle to grave within the confines of this tiny jungle. Summer is the high tide of their lives, and copulation is the order of the day. Yellow soldier beetles, milkweed bugs and others travel in pairs along the stems and across the flowers, joined, one atop another. It's apparent that whatever these creatures are, whatever they do, whatever their purpose in the Grand Scheme, one thing is certain: there will be more of them. Each will lay eggs at a given time in a given place; each will give rise to a nymph or larva of some definite form; each will take a specific food, and each will grow, and develop, and reproduce in its own particular fashion. Continuity, mutation, evolution—whole futures are implied in the couplings among the weeds. There are many more questions than answers here.

Looking deeper into the green tangle,

**By Ken Wolgemuth**

I see no end to the inhabitants. Gangly-legged harvestmen toddle across the flowers; treehoppers hug the stalks, pretending to be thorns; green, dome-like tortoise beetles sit quietly among the leaves. Nearby are the beetles' larvae. Flattened, oval-shaped and legless, each carries arched over its back a black globular mass of excrement and shed skins. They mill about, two or three to a leaf, waving their queer parasols and grazing on the foliage.



On one plant there is an assemblage of thirty or more aphids. Plump, comical little beasts, they bend eagerly to the stem, siphoning sap through their sharp beaks. Among the aphids are their guardians, the ants. Like nervous tree-tappers tending their groves, the ants hurry from aphid to aphid, tasting the sweet honeydew each exudes while, at the same time, keeping a sharp watch for any interlopers that could threaten their defenseless charges.

One creature has escaped the ants' notice, however, and moves among the

aphids like a lion among lambs. Elongate, fleet of foot, it is the larva of the green lacewing. As I watch, the larva runs up to an aphid, impales the hapless creature on sickle-shape mandibles and raises it, kicking, into the air to drain it dry. Thus I am reminded that where there is life there must also be death.

Indeed, if some of the insects here are breeding at an incredible pace, others are waiting to assail the new generations as fast as they are produced. Under the summer sun creatures as alive as you and I are dying horribly, by the hundreds, on every side.

**I FIND before me creatures I had only read about—creatures I had always thought rare and exotic simply because I had never seen them. I had never seen them because I had never looked.**

Most often the end comes swiftly, unexpectedly, with a lunge, a brief struggle and a final snap of jaws. Crab spiders lurk among the florets of goldenrod; flies that come for nectar find instead grasping limbs and the shock of injected venom. A robber fly an inch long darts out to snatch a bee from the sky in full flight, then returns to his perch to dine. An assassin bug sneaks up on an unwary beetle, unfolding from beneath his body a long jointed beak. The bug rams it home and the beetle is lifted high, its life juices draining away. Deep in the weeds small silken mummies wriggle feebly in the spiderwebs stretched taut between the stems.

To the less fortunate, death comes in a more insidious fashion: it comes slowly, gradually, gnawing from within. Unfurling a rolled up leaf, I draw back with a shudder. Inside is a caterpillar that had hidden there to pupate. His skin, and the shiny black capsule of his head are all that remain—these, and the plump, writhing forms of the parasitic maggots that ate him alive.

It suddenly dawns on me that what I see here is nothing compared to all that remains invisible. I am momentarily struck with a horror of the hidden.



What is visible can be prepared for; what is unseen may take one by surprise, may overwhelm. Unseen are the borers in the stems, the miners in the leaf tissues. Unseen are the myriad creatures of the leaf litter and the soil—the mites, the grubs, the springtails and the centipedes. Unseen are the parasites—the worms and white maggots gnawing at nature silently, from the inside out.

For a brief moment my perspective changes; I seem to shrink, or the weeds to grow. Dusty stems tower over me, and there is a rustling in the filtered green light. Glistening armored creatures regard me through bulbous eyes. Bristly limbs creak, intricate mouthparts come wetly together, and my ears are filled with a soft, sustained munching, munching, munching. . . .

A needlelike stab to my forearm shatters the illusion and I am once again seated by an ordinary weedpatch at the edge of a woodlot at sunset. I look down

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## GAME NEWS

For a Friend . . .

to find a mosquito making a meal of my blood. Like it or not, I seem to have been drawn into the cycle of things. I stand to leave, a bit shaken but oddly, and marvelously, cheered.

It is not necessary to range farther and farther, into ever wilder territory, if all you seek is a brief escape from the human world and some small assurance that the wild and the natural still exist. It is all right there at your doorstep, and you don't have to know the name of a single plant or animal to share in its unfolding.

Nature is alive and well, and living in the weeds. Look for it.

### New Furbearer Book

*Wild Furbearer Management and Conservation in North America*, edited by Milan Novak, James A. Baker, Martyn E. Obbard, and Bruce Malloch, Education Division, Ontario Trappers Association, P.O. Box 705, North Bay, Ontario, Canada P1B8J8, 1168 pages, \$79, delivered. Sure to be the most authoritative reference on trapping and furbearer management for years to come. This comprehensive volume covers the fascinating history of trapping, from the use of furbearers by prehistoric people more than 11,000 years ago, up to the livelihood/sport it is today. With over 100 authors, each writing on his own area of expertise, and 225 reviewers, the information is surely the most factual and up-to-date ever compiled. Although technical in content and design, this book will appeal to trappers, resource managers, students, naturalists and everybody else interested in wild-life; and with 727 black-and-white figures and 203 tables, the technical information is easy to quickly comprehend. Following the thorough history of the profession are sections on trappers of the past and today, and then management principles and techniques. Making up about a third of the book are 30 chapters, each covering one furbearer. Information in these include: a full-page color illustration of the species, its description, distribution, life history, ecology, management, and much more. Most interesting and useful, perhaps, is the 110-page section on fur grading and pelt identification. It includes 849 detailed color illustrations, arranged in 104 figures, that depict regional pelt differences and the various grades of fur—from early to prime to late—for 42 furbearers. Chapters on proven trap sets and pelt handling techniques may be of special interest to trappers. Concluding chapters cover diseases and parasites, the effects of toxic wastes, modern furbearer research techniques, and regional furbearer management programs. Again, this is undoubtedly the most comprehensive book on the subject ever to be published, and will certainly prove to be an invaluable reference for everybody interested in the subject.



**WATERFOWL HUNTING** is what many people first associate with the Northwest Region, but the area is home to all sorts of wildlife and offers outstanding recreation opportunities.

## ***Hunting in Northwestern Pennsylvania***

**By Robert G. MacWilliams**

**IES, Northwest Region**

**N**ORTHWEST Pennsylvania is an outdoorsman's paradise. From the shores of Lake Erie to the secluded mountains of the Allegheny, this 10-county region supports healthy populations of every game and furbearer

species available to Keystone State hunters and trappers. The marshes in this corner of the state provide some of the best duck and goose hunting in the Eastern United States. Yet just a short drive away a hunter may follow bird dog patterns to ruffed grouse on steep forested mountainsides. And for big game hunters, deer, turkey and even bear are getting more plentiful and widespread with each passing year.

The Northwest is comprised of two geographic areas. The line representing the southern extent of the Wisconsin Glaciers, here some 70,000 years ago, runs diagonally from the northeast to the southwest, cutting the Northwest Region in half. Land in the glacial zone,





north of the line, is characterized by small ponds, swampy depressions and knoblike mounds of sand and gravel. This glaciated part of the Northwest Region tends to be damper, flatter and more suited to agriculture than the more hilly and forested land to the south. Pymatuning, Conneaut Lake, French Creek and the flat wet drainage to Lake Erie lie in this zone.

The land not affected by the glacier is characterized by the "big woods" of Warren, Forest, Jefferson and Clarion counties. This terrain is marked by deep river valleys and steep hills and mountains. Major drainages in the unglaciated land include the Allegheny and Clarion Rivers.

When many hunters think of northwestern Pennsylvania they think about the Pymatuning Wildlife Management Area and big Canada geese coming down to corn stalk blinds or ducks winging past camouflaged sneak-boats. Each fall finds up to 20,000 Canada geese using the 17,000-acre impoundment and surrounding 8000 acres of farm and wetlands on this Game Commission facility. Every September approximately 1000 applicants are chosen at a public drawing to use one of the 40 established goose blinds—each for one morning during the season. Every lucky applicant is entitled to bring up to three guests. A limited number of duck blinds is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Look for a goose blind application form and procedures in the "Pennsylvania Hunting and Trapping Digest," given with each hunting and furtaking license.

Waterfowl are by no means the only Pymatuning attraction. Since the area was developed in the 1930s, increasing numbers of photographers, birdwatchers, fishermen and other outdoor enthusiasts have also flocked to the area. The rustic Pymatuning Wildlife Museum serves as a focus for many activi-

ties. Centered in a natural setting along the lake shore, the museum grounds include a self guided nature trail and several wildlife observation points. Inside, visitors find nearly 300 mounted specimens of wildlife on display. In addition, seminars and public programs are often held in the museum auditorium.

Pymatuning has long been noted for sustaining the state's only nesting bald eagles. At least one pair or another has nested near the impoundment for decades, and in more recent years up to five nesting pairs of bald eagles have been found. These majestic birds can often be seen from the museum patio and other vantage points. Birdwatchers are asked to view the endangered birds only from a distance, however, because past research has indicated human disturbance is a significant cause of eagle nest failures.

### Recreation Areas

Pymatuning may be the most publicized, but Conneaut Marsh, Sandy Lake and Siegel Marsh are just a few of the other popular public recreation areas in this corner of the state.

Complementing the lowlying agricultural terrain in the glaciated portion of the Northwest is the mountainous forested portion in the Region's opposite corner. The counties of Warren,



**BALD EAGLES** have nested in the region for many years. Here, agency officials band a young eagle before it's old enough to leave the nest on its own.

## STATE GAME LANDS

| <i>County</i> | <i>Tract</i> | <i>Nearest Town</i> | <i>Acreage</i> | <i>Game</i>                    |
|---------------|--------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| Butler        | 95           | Old Annandale       | 8,536          | Rabbit, Pheasant, Deer         |
|               | 164          | Butler              | 399            | Rabbit, Squirrel, Grouse       |
| Clarion       | 65           | Shippensburg        | 3,413          | Deer, Squirrel, Turkey         |
|               | 72           | Clarion             | 2,025          | Deer, Squirrel, Grouse         |
|               | 74           | Strattanville       | 6,320          | Deer, Bear, Turkey             |
| Crawford      | 69           | Guys Mills          | 4,366          | Duck, Grouse, Pheasant         |
|               | 85           | Cambridge Springs   | 115            | Duck, Pheasant, Rabbit         |
|               | 122          | Hydetown            | 2,649          | Pheasant, Rabbit, Duck         |
|               | 144          | Spartansburg        | 423            | Grouse, Rabbit                 |
|               | 146          | New Richmond        | 526            | Rabbit, Grouse, Pheasant       |
|               | 152          | Crossingville       | 499            | Rabbit, Deer, Grouse           |
|               | 199          | Riceville           | 1,132          | Rabbit, Pheasant, Grouse       |
|               | 200          | New Richmond        | 154            | Rabbit, Grouse, Squirrel       |
|               | 213          | Conneaut Lake       | 5,555          | Duck, Pheasant, Rabbit         |
|               | 214          | Hartstown           | 5,399          | Geese, Duck, Rabbit            |
|               | 269          | Mosiertown          | 590            | Duck, Rabbit, Pheasant         |
|               | 277          | Cambridge Springs   | 972            | Duck, Rabbit, Pheasant         |
| Erie          | 101          | Albion              | 4,272          | Grouse, Woodcock, Rabbit       |
|               | 102          | Union City          | 384            | Rabbit, Grouse, Squirrel       |
|               | 109          | Waterford           | 1,639          | Duck, Pheasant, Rabbit         |
|               | 154          | Wattsburg           | 1,416          | Rabbit, Pheasant, Woodcock     |
|               | 155          | Philippsville       | 391            | Rabbit, Pheasant, Woodcock     |
|               | 161          | Philippsville       | 235            | Rabbit, Pheasant, Woodcock     |
|               | 162          | Wattsburg           | 206            | Rabbit, Pheasant, Woodcock     |
|               | 163          | Colt Station        | 312            | Rabbit, Pheasant, Woodcock     |
|               | 167          | Wattsburg           | 627            | Rabbit, Pheasant, Woodcock     |
|               | 190          | Waterford           | 327            | Rabbit, Pheasant, Woodcock     |
|               | 191          | Little Hope         | 1,224          | Rabbit, Pheasant, Woodcock     |
|               | 192          | Waterford           | 333            | Rabbit, Pheasant, Woodcock     |
|               | 202          | Union City          | 507            | Rabbit, Grouse, Squirrel       |
|               | 218          | Erie                | 1,344          | Duck, Pheasant, Rabbit         |
| Forest        | 263          | Cory                | 668            | Pheasant, Rabbit, Deer         |
|               | 24           | Newmanville         | 8,390          | Turkey, Deer, Bear             |
| Jefferson     | 31           | Punxsutawney        | 5,176          | Deer, Turkey, Squirrel         |
|               | 54           | Brockway            | 21,821         | Deer, Bear, Turkey             |
|               | 195          | Big Run             | 1,294          | Deer, Turkey, Squirrel         |
|               | 244          | Emrickville         | 4,868          | Deer, Turkey, Grouse           |
| Lawrence      | 283          | Cooksburg           | 6,564          | Deer, Rabbit, Squirrel         |
|               | 150          | Pulaski             | 505            | Rabbit, Pheasant, Squirrel     |
|               | 151          | Harlansburg         | 1,039          | Rabbit, Fox, Squirrel, Grouse  |
|               | 148          | New Beaver          | 369            | Deer, Rabbit, Squirrel         |
|               | 178          | East Brook          | 164            | Rabbit, Pheasant, Squirrel     |
| Mercer        | 216          | Harlansburg         | 487            | Rabbit, Pheasant, Duck         |
|               | 130          | Sandy Lake          | 2,356          | Rabbit, Deer, Pheasant         |
|               | 284          | Leesburg            | 1,373          | Rabbit, Pheasant, Deer         |
|               | 294          | Mercer              | 417            | Rabbit, Pheasant, Deer, Duck   |
| Venango       | 39           | Franklin            | 9,635          | Deer, Grouse, Squirrel         |
|               | 45           | Van                 | 5,170          | Deer, Grouse, Squirrel         |
|               | 47           | Oil City            | 2,216          | Deer, Squirrel                 |
|               | 96           | Dempseytown         | 4,973          | Rabbit, Grouse, Deer, Squirrel |
| Warren        | 253          | Plummer             | 665            | Deer, Grouse, Rabbit           |
|               | 29           | Warren              | 9,363          | Turkey, Deer, Bear             |
|               | 86           | Tidioute            | 14,227         | Deer, Turkey, Squirrel         |
|               | 143          | Garland             | 8,177          | Deer, Grouse, Squirrel         |
|               | 197          | Columbus            | 1,346          | Deer, Duck, Rabbit             |
|               | 272          | Newton Station      | 186            | Rabbit, Squirrel, Deer         |
|               | 282          | Akeley              | 445            | Deer, Rabbit, Squirrel         |



Venango, Forest and Jefferson have long been noted for outstanding deer hunting. In recent years, though, due to refinements to the agency's deer management program, Clarion and Butler Counties have become noted whitetail hotspots. Yet, for those who want trophy bucks, Erie, Crawford, Mercer and Lawrence counties are certainly worth considering.

The Northwest is becoming fine bear country. Each year good numbers of bruins are claimed as trophies in this corner of the state. Forest, Warren and Jefferson are the region's leading bear producing counties, but Clarion and Venango counties have fair shares, too.

Wild turkeys abound in the Northwest. Thanks to the success of the agency's trap and transfer program, these regal birds are now found not just in the region's more remote forested areas, but also in farmland woodlots and reclaimed stripmine sites.

Some of the best ruffed grouse hunting in the state can be found in the Northwest. Good hunting exists almost throughout the region. In forested areas, good grouse hunters know to concentrate on regenerating clearcuts and around grape vines on hillsides. In other areas, reclaimed stripmines and reverting farmland is where our state bird is likely to be found.

If you're among the many enthusiasts who enjoy hunting a mixed bag of grouse and woodcock, consider the swamps, marshes and water courses in Erie, Crawford and Mercer Counties. The hunting can be fast and furious for those who happen to time their hunts with the southern timberdoodle migrations as they pass through our state.

Rabbits can be found in most areas of the Northwest, particularly in the agricultural lands. Look for cottontails in old farms in Clarion County, reverting stripmines in Jefferson County, and

**FARM GAME COOPERATIVE PROGRAM**

| <i>County</i> | <i>Acreage</i> | <i>Number of Farms</i> |
|---------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Butler        | 13,573         | 126                    |
| Clarion       | 39,721         | 377                    |
| Crawford      | 71,822         | 725                    |
| Erie          | 31,279         | 295                    |
| Jefferson     | 67,145         | 401                    |
| Lawrence      | 73,890         | 770                    |
| Mercer        | 83,921         | 947                    |
| Venango       | 54,127         | 571                    |
| Warren        | 31,578         | 239                    |

among grapevine tangles near cleared fields in Mercer County.

As is true for much of Pennsylvania, gray squirrels are plentiful and under-harvested in the Northwest. As an added incentive, though, this Region offers bushytail hunters possibly the best opportunity to bag both the gray and black phases of the gray squirrel, and fox squirrels. Forest County probably holds more black squirrels than any other in the region, while fox squirrels are most likely to be found in the woodlots of Butler, Erie, Mercer and Lawrence counties.

Everyone knows, of course, that the waterfowl hunting is great here in the



**DEER are found throughout the region. Those who want trophy bucks should consider Erie, Crawford, Mercer and Lawrence counties.**



**THE RUSTIC Pymatuning Wildlife Museum serves as a focus for many activities. Nearly 300 wildlife specimens are on display, and seminars and public programs are often held in the auditorium.**

Northwest. For those who like hunting over big water, Presque Isle, on the Lake Erie shore, offers good hunting for diving ducks. For those who prefer jump shooting or float trips, particularly for mallards and woodies, there are the small swamps and creek bottoms of Mercer County, the streams of Lawrence County, and French Creek and the Allegheny River in Venango County. Crawford County, of course, offers outstanding waterfowling, too. In fact, a study done years ago indicated Craw-

ford County alone accounted for 65 percent of the region's wood duck production.

Although the southeast is usually thought of as the state's best dove hunting country, doves are plentiful in the flat agricultural lands of Crawford, Erie, Mercer and Butler counties.

Trapping should not be overlooked in any outdoor recreation survey of the Northwest. Crawford County has long produced more fur, particularly beaver and muskrat, than any other county in

#### DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES LANDS OPEN TO PUBLIC HUNTING IN NORTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

| <i>County</i> | <i>Name</i>                   | <i>Location</i>       | <i>Acreage</i> |
|---------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Butler        | Moraine State Park            | Portersville          | 13,600         |
|               | Jennings State Park           | Slippery Rock         | 40             |
| Clarion       | Cook Forest State Park        | Cooksburg             | 4,000          |
| Crawford      | Pymatuning State Park         | Jamestown             | 18,275         |
| Forest        | Kittanning State Forest       | Northeast of Tionesta | 2,247          |
| Jefferson     | Kittanning State Forest       | Northeast of Munderf  | 9,380          |
|               | Clearcreek State Park         | Sigel                 | 210            |
| Lawrence      | McConnells Mill State Park    | West of Portersville  | 2,000          |
| Mercer        | Maurice K. Goddard State Park | Sandy Lake            | 1,316          |
| Venango       | Oil Creek State Park          | Oil City              | 6,500          |
| Warren        | Chapman Dam State Park        | Clarendon             | 360            |



the state. Raccoons and mink cannot be overlooked, though, as they are important furbearers of the region as well.

The great wildlife resources of the Northwest are complemented by an equal wealth of public lands. The Game Commission owns 57 tracts, totaling nearly 170,000 acres, of State Game Lands in the Northwest Region. Like all State Game Lands, these are managed specifically for wildlife and, for the most part, are open to outdoor enthusiasts the year round.

Thanks to the generosity of 6891 landowners, 793,886 acres of private land are open to sportsmen through the agency's Farm-Game and Safety Zone programs, and another 155,197 acres are enrolled in the Forest-Game program. To keep these programs viable, it's important that users ask permission in advance and then treat the land with respect.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources administers nine State Parks, totaling 46,301 acres, and two State Forests totaling 11,627 acres. State Forests and most State Parks are open to hunting, but some recreation facilities are marked as Safety Zones (no hunting within 150 yards) for protection to others during the hunting seasons.

Four federal areas are in the Northwest. These are the Allegheny National Forest, the Erie National Wildlife Refuge, and the Army Corps of Engineers Flood Control Recreation Areas at Kinzua and Shenango Dam. The Allegheny National Forest actually lies in both the Northwest and Northcentral Regions. It totals 471,081 acres, with almost half—230,745 acres—in the Northwest. The Game Commission, under a cooperative agreement, helps manage wildlife on the Allegheny. Bulldozing, browse cutting and food plot planting are some of the activities the agency conducts

**TRAPPING** should not be overlooked in any outdoor survey of the Northwest. Crawford County has long produced more fur, particularly beaver and muskrat, than any other county in the state.

### SAFETY ZONE PROGRAM

| County    | Acreage | Number of Farms |
|-----------|---------|-----------------|
| Butler    | 59,610  | 496             |
| Clarion   | 20,424  | 140             |
| Crawford  | 43,153  | 319             |
| Erie      | 46,338  | 338             |
| Forest    | 16,236  | 80              |
| Jefferson | 24,196  | 162             |
| Lawrence  | 4,866   | 56              |
| Mercer    | 42,967  | 371             |
| Venango   | 24,711  | 203             |
| Warren    | 44,329  | 275             |

there. Within this vast recreation area are small Safety Zones around picnic and camping sites.

Much of the Kinzua area is open to hunting; turkey, deer and bear inhabit the area. The Erie National Wildlife Refuge in Crawford County, created in 1959, is Pennsylvania's first and only federal refuge. Spanning Lake Creek, the refuge offers small game and deer hunting.

The Northwest, like most other regions of the state, offers a variety of hunting and trapping recreation. From renowned waterfowling to top-notch whitetail hunting, the Northwest has it all.





SCOTT WEIDENSAUL



# Portrait of a Prehistoric Hunter

By Sam Fadala

AHTOR scratched four images on the wall of the dwelling as members of the clan, uttering sounds of approval, inspected his artistic work. His reindeer, two back-deep in snow, two with stiffened legs pointing straight up to mark the location of the meat cache, pleased the man. He dreamed of the hunt that night. In the auditorium of his sleeping brain he could hear the shrill whistles cut the air as the clan kept track of each other. Centuries later, remnants of the little bone whistles would glisten on cave floors for other men to find and wonder about. The band of reindeer had circled many miles with the eight fur-clad men on their trail. The animals were strong. But the men were resolute. The reindeer were fast. But the men were tenacious. Their lives depended on the success of the chase. There was no more meat cached near the large natural cave in the hillside.

This man survived on protein, his digestive tract far too short to successfully consume great quantities of vegetation. He was a meateater; and, therefore, a hunter.

The group closed on the reindeer. Two of the hunters, including the artist, funneled the animals into a deep ravine. The reindeer were trapped. Ahtor had with him three tools of the chase: his stone axe with a long wooden handle, its cutting edge highly polished; a flint-tipped spear, also with a long shaft; and a flint knife so sharp that a surgeon many eons later would perform a delicate operation with similar blades of flint to prove their worth.

The hunt was always for food. For life. But it was also a way of life. Exciting. Challenging. Rewarding. The perils were unconsciously welcomed. Rein-

deer were no threat to these ancient sportsmen, but to hunt them in winter meant struggling against the elements of nature, which were oftentimes much more dangerous than wild beasts. Ahtor delivered the first blow. His sharpened stone-headed axe felled one animal, its back broken. The hunters closed in on the group of animals, and before the reindeer could double back to escape, five lay thrashing in the snow. The razor-like flint knives reduced one of the carcasses to meat. The other four were left in the snow, two with legs upward to mark the spot, just as Ahtor had drawn them on the walls of the cave. The hunters would carry away what meat they could, hoping that the remaining carcasses would not be discovered by roaming predators or human hunters from another clan. But first, a feast, bred of ritual as well as hunger. Eahmah, the fire-starter, gathered fuel for a blaze, and soon tongues of yellow leaped hungrily to lick morsels of meat held on spear points. The hunters ate the fresh meat in silence. There was no competition for the food. Each had his fill.

## Much Game

Ahtor's clan had much game to hunt. The cave bear, larger than his future cousin, the grizzly, dwelled in the area. The woolly-haired rhino and the hippo were occasionally taken. Mammoths were few now, but occasionally one might be seen. There was aurochs, which a student of a much later time would note as a bull-like creature almost as large as the hairy elephantine mammoth with long curving tusks. The wild horse was often hunted. The Irish elk, ten feet tall and with moose-like antlers 11 feet from tip to tip, was highly prized by those bands of hunters who



could surround and subdue the mighty animal. In this era, there were only a few of the great Irish elk left. They were prized for their good meat.

Next morning Ahtor finished his drawing before the hunters grouped to go back for the meat they had earned the day before. His work had inspired Ohohmah to inscribe the likeness of a reindeer on a large piece of ivory. The ancient scrimshander could never know that his prize would be praised by other men of a distant future.

### 16 Strong

The band was 16 strong, including four young women. Their lances and stone tomahawks shown against the snow background as the troupe single-filed its way to the harvest site. Later generations would have the bow and arrow, the sling, the bola, boomerang and blowgun. Ahtor's companions were only on the threshold of improving their hunting implements. But they had come very far from their predecessors.

They hunted in packs, groups of men working together for a common goal, the procurement of meat. They had their whistles of great range, made from the foot bones of reindeer. Even in the thickest forest they could keep track of

WHEN THE fur-clad men gathered around the fallen reindeer to retrieve their meat, the bear burst from cover. Ootah was the unfortunate one. It was he who stood first in the path; it was he who was struck first.

each other's movements by whistling. In such a way they remained a party of hunters, rather than a scattered group of single men.

The men also fished, although at first their angling was more like hunting. They fished with harpoons in the beginning, and later with small gorges fashioned from stone. The harpoon heads of bone were attached to the ends of long shafts, held there only until the head was driven into a fish, at which time the head fell free from the shaft and the long cord attached to it was used to play the fish and land it. No matter the size of the fish, if the barbed head were set well into its flesh, it could be landed by the cord. The fish gorges, stones pointed on both ends, with a center groove for attachment of a cord, were baited and dropped into the water. When a fish swallowed the bait the stone became wedged inside, allowing the men to pull it to shore. They sniggled fish as well, thrusting the sniggler, a spear, into likely places along the shoreline where fish might be hiding.

The return trek for the meat turned into an unwanted adventure. A cave bear had found the cache and he winded the approaching hunters. It circled around the scent and waited for the two-legged intruders to converge on what he considered to be his food. When the fur-clad men gathered around the fallen reindeer to retrieve their meat, the bear burst from cover. Ootah was the unfortunate one. It was he who stood first in the path; it was he who was struck first. The men immediately began to blow their reindeer whistles to confuse the animal and then began to circle the beast. It was the fallen Ootah who saved the rest of the hunting party. In his panic he lay upon the ground beneath the shaggy animal, screaming at it, beating upon it, and finally inflicting two large wounds in its



THE REFUSE of one culture would become a wordless encyclopedia for another. The cast-offs of these ancient hunters would educate future men, who would study each fragment as a piece of an immense jigsaw puzzle.

underside with powerful jabs of his sharp flint knife.

The hunters continued to circle. Finally, one spear thrust found home and then another. The great bear seemed as surprised as he was enraged as the circling two-legged animals made pass after pass. Before succumbing, the bear dealt one fatal blow to Ootah, who then lay quietly in the snow beneath the huge predator. As the beast moved away from its victim to claim another, a sharp-pointed spear slipped between two ribs and sliced deeply into the vital chest region. Shrill whistles cut the air continuously. Great claws found one more antagonist in a mad lunge. Anark fell. But he was only slightly wounded. He would recover from the wound, but never again would he have the full use of his left arm. He felt an almost equal loss for his torn clothing, the long fur glove that kept his hand warm, and the coat of furs sewn together with reindeer sinew threaded on a needle of bone. Both glove and coat were badly torn.

When the cave bear faltered, shouts rose unanimously from the hunters. The beast lifted to its full height on its hind legs and then fell forward in the deep snow. The men continued to circle and thrust until they were sure the great animal was dead. Now they had more meat. Eeamah removed the head of the bear. He would carry the heavy burden back to the cave, and there he would remove each tooth. He would then drill the teeth and string them all together with fine reindeer sinew. The necklace of teeth would remain in a corner of



the cave to be found centuries later by inquisitive hands and eyes that would place the relic alongside others to be catalogued and referred to.

The great head of the bear would also be found, for it was never removed from the cave. Flakes of telltale flint remained imbedded in the skull for posterity. The refuse of one culture would become a tangible wordless encyclopedia for another. Hundreds of bird bones were left behind in the cave of Ahtor the artist, for his people were expert fowlers. The cast-offs of these ancient sportsmen would educate future man, who would study each fragment as a piece of an immense jigsaw puzzle. The relics of many feasts lay scattered in and around the cave when Ahtor and his companions abandoned their home for another. The hunters had fared well in the region, but as with all hunters, the desire to discover what lay over the horizon drew them away, like moths attracted to the flames of the fire.

## Thoughts While Walking

*Man is created free, and is free, Though he be born in chains.*

—Schiller

# 1988 Progress Report

By Pete Duncan

PGC Executive Director

**T**HE PENNSYLVANIA Game Commission has been active these past few months, enhancing existing programs and developing new ones to better serve wildlife and sportsmen.

Foremost may be the statewide implementation of the "bonus" deer system that proved successful in finally achieving adequate antlerless deer harvests the Southeast Special Regulations Area last year. The details of this new program are covered in Conservation News, beginning on page 33. In essence, antlerless deer licenses still unsold three weeks after going on sale will be made available as bonus deer licenses to hunters who want to hunt for a second deer. This new tool should enable us to better control deer populations in those counties experiencing overpopulation problems and provide more outdoor recreation opportunities for sportsmen.

This year marks the beginning of statewide nontoxic shot regulations for waterfowlers. Along with at least a dozen other states, Pennsylvania has elected to implement statewide steel shot requirements this year, rather than enact county regulations that would

have to be changed annually over the next several years. We're pleased that the state's dedicated waterfowlers support our efforts to reduce the lead poisoning problem in waterfowl and other wildlife as quickly as possible with as little inconvenience to hunters as possible.

Waterfowlers in the Northwest Region will be glad to learn that the agency is evaluating the one-goose limit that's been in effect in Butler, Crawford, Erie and Mercer counties for years. Although the past four decades have seen the number of Canada geese rise from 179,000 to 760,000 in the Atlantic Flyway, and from 76,000 to 662,000 in the Mississippi Flyway, the numbers wintering in the south, particularly in North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee, have dropped dramatically over the past 25 years.

## Confounding Factors

Those confounding factors, and the fact many of the geese that migrate through northwest Pennsylvania include flocks theoretically destined for wintering areas in those states, have made federal managers reluctant to increase bag limits here. To get a better understanding of the situation and, ultimately we hope, have Canada geese bag limits increased in the northwest, we have arranged for the Wildlife Unit at Cornell University to study Canada goose populations in the area. Studies will include evaluations of resident and migrant geese, flock structures, movement patterns and other information. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officials will need before considering increased bag limits.

**THE UPLAND vegetation cutter purchased for the agency by the Ruffed Grouse Society is a fine example of the support provided by organized sportsmen.**





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## GAME NEWS

For a Friend . . .

We were disappointed to learn this year that we weren't going to receive pure-bred Sichuan pheasant eggs from Michigan. While that particular phase of our pheasant recovery program will consequently be delayed for at least another year, we're continuing to evaluate the success of the Sichuan-ringneck crossbreed. Winter censuses uncovered 56 of the 580 Sichuan-ringneck crossbreeds released in 1987 on the Lettorkenny Army Depot in Franklin County, and 412 of the 1500 released in Mercer County. It was quite apparent to censusers that the winter food and cover conditions were better in Mercer County. More hybrid birds will be released at each location this year. Therefore, like last year, the portion of Mercer County west of I-79 and north of Route 80 will be closed to pheasant hunting in 1988.

At their January meeting the Commission changed the name of the Bureau of Game Management to Bureau of Wildlife Management, and authorized eight new positions. Under the restructuring the bureau is now divided into the Divisions of Forest Wildlife, Farm Wildlife, Waterfowl and Migratory Birds, Furbearers, Endangered Species and Nongame Wildlife, and Propagation. These changes will enable us to better direct our resources at those wildlife species that require more manpower and attention.

Continuing our aggressive land acquisition program, the Commission has approved the purchase of over 5700 acres so far this year, bringing to 1,315,651 the total number of acres in our State Game Lands network. Our acquisition efforts are greatly enhanced by conservancies and sportsmen who not only contribute through the purchase of hunting licenses, but also by generating additional monies that enable us to acquire tracts in areas, particularly in the southeast, where the price of land is beyond the agency's means. Such contributions benefit sportsmen, wildlife and, ultimately, all citizens of the commonwealth.

Another example of outstanding sup-

port by organized sportsmen was the donation of an upland vegetation cutter by the Ruffed Grouse Society. We now have two of these modern machines in operation, being used to rejuvenate low ground cover for wildlife. The one donated by the Society is being used for habitat improvement in the Southwest Region.

This year's hunter-trapper education students will enjoy a new film, "The Measure of the Hunt—What Hunter Responsibility is All About." The film, much of which was shot in southcentral Pennsylvania, was produced by Madison Productions, and will be a useful tool for teaching new sportsmen about the importance of good ethics and landowner relations.

A compilation of 1987 reports indicated our law enforcement officers did a fine job enforcing the newly enacted Game and Wildlife Code. Last year officers settled 4732 violations through Field Acknowledgment of Guilt, filed 3350 citations before the Minor Judiciary, and issued over 12,800 written and verbal warnings. Penalty revenues from these violations exceeded \$1.2 million in 1987.

License sales for the 1987-88 year seem to be up three percent over the previous year's sales, with most of the increase in the number of nonresident, furtaker and antlerless deer licenses.

So far, 1988 has been an exciting and busy time for the Pennsylvania Game Commission. Sportsmen might find the bonus deer program and the new steel shot regulations to be the most obvious improvements to our overall management efforts, but we are continually trying to enhance and streamline every facet of the agency's operations to make Pennsylvania an even better place for wildlife and sportsmen.



# FIELD NOTES



## Remember Who Paid for Them

**ELK COUNTY**—Over the years hunters have seen their license fees go towards the purchase of over 1.3 million acres of land for hunting and wildlife. Every year, however, finds increasing numbers of nonhunters taking advantage of the wholesome recreation opportunities these properties offer. While hikers, cross country skiers, bird watchers, fishermen and others are certainly free to use State Game Lands, I can't help but get more than a little upset when a nonhunter complains about having hunters around. — WCO Richard S. Bodenhorn, Ridgway.



## Quick Retreat

**FOREST COUNTY**—Last winter Mr. Kerr and Mr. Breckenridge were training their pointers when Mr. Kerr's dog abruptly came to a staunch point. Anxious to demonstrate his dog's prowess, Mr. Kerr closed in, expecting to find a grouse. Well, the grouse turned out to be a sleeping 300-pounder with a furry black coat. When I asked Mr. Kerr if he was able to get his dog out of the woods, he told me that his dog found his own way out and that he wasted no time doing it. — WCO Al Pedder, Marienville.

## Common Sense

**DAUPHIN COUNTY**—The lady was indignant. She had been trying to reach me for three days. When I asked her why she didn't leave a message on my answering machine, she said she didn't like those machines. After also admitting that she hadn't tried to contact anybody else, she went on to say that her dog had been bitten by a skunk and that she was afraid it might get rabies. At that point I could only suggest that she consult her veterinarian. Believe me, we wildlife officers are not always immediately available, and we certainly can't respond unless a caller leaves a message. If a person or domestic animal gets bitten by a wild animal, don't delay. If you can't reach a WCO, contact your physician or veterinarian immediately and follow his advice. — WCO Skip Littwin, Hummelstown.

## No Excuse

**PHILADELPHIA COUNTY**—Not too long ago Deputy Waterways Conservation Officer Bob Radcliff and I had to rescue a great blue heron that was tangled in some discarded fishing line. That bird was lucky, but I hate to imagine how many other wild animals are not so fortunate. Please, remember to dispose of litter properly. — WCO Richard J. Shire, Philadelphia.

## Worth Repeating

**CENTRE COUNTY**—Every year well-meaning individuals pick up what they believe to be lost or abandoned wild animals. And every year these "rescued" animals cause a lot of problems and break a lot of hearts along the way. We say it every year, but it's one of those things worth repeating: Please, leave wildlife in the woods. — WCO George Mock, Coburn.



## Obvious

**VENANGO COUNTY**—Last year I met a man hunting on his own land. Because he was a farmer and, therefore, entitled to hunt on his land without a license, I asked him why he had one. He explained that he knew the agency gets no general tax monies to manage wildlife, and that buying a hunting license was his way of supporting wildlife management. Later, a teacher called, wanting to know if he and his wife needed hunting licenses because they raised a few steers on their land for personal consumption. He became agitated, however, after I explained that they did, because they weren't making a living from their land. He went on to rant and rave about all the deer damage he has, but that makes no difference. I got to thinking about the farmer and the teacher, and which one needs to be educated. —WCO Leonard C. Hribar, Seneca.

## All the Same

**PERRY COUNTY**—I was desperate for a Field Note when my daughter Holly bailed me out. She was looking at our new beaver tags, which say "PA BEAVER," and asked me what we use for ma beavers. —WCO Jim Brown, Loysville.

## Chipped In

The accidental spill of 750,000 gallons of diesel fuel into the Monongahela River last January was quite a disaster for wildlife. Everything from ducks and geese to herons and kingfishers were oiled. Out of this, however, came the greatest outpouring of concern for wildlife I've ever seen. Even though cleaning oiled birds is pretty slick business, many volunteers worked tirelessly, none considered ducking their chores. So, to Fred Rimmel and the rest of the Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania, thanks for a job well done. —LMO Dick Belding, Waynesburg.



## Still a Good Idea

**SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY**—To my fellow officers I say thanks! Since my friend, Land Manager Chet Harris, wrote a Field Note about me wearing pantyhose under my fishing waders—to make them easier to get on and off—I've been receiving strange looks and even stranger comments from people throughout the county. Furthermore, my pantyhose wardrobe has never been more complete or colorful, thanks to contributions from many GAME NEWS readers. —WCO Charles J. Arcovitch, Kingsley.

## Or Start

**ADAMS COUNTY**—The Buchanan Valley Rod and Gun Club recently sponsored a hunter-trapper education course and the average age of the students was 45 (the youngest was 12, the oldest 71). It just goes to show, you're never too old to learn. —WCO Mike Dubaich, Aspers.

## One Step Ahead

**McKEAN COUNTY**—When one of my Safety Zone cooperators went out one January morning to feed his cows he discovered three raccoons in his silo. The farmer said that in all the years he's been farming the raccoons always got into his corn, but that this was the first time they found the corn after it had been taken from the fields. —WCO James Rankin, Allegany.



### Comes With the Job

**GREENE COUNTY**—I recently heard of a deputy who mistook veal for venison. His supervising wildlife conservation officer, however, not to be out done, spent several hours in the dark, waiting to nab some suspects with illegal geese, only to discover that what they were carrying were decoys.—WCO R. Ansell, Rogersville.

### Same Job, Different State

**CLARION COUNTY**—I had a pleasant visit with my brother Kevin a few months ago. He's a wildlife officer in Kansas, stationed in Wichita. It was a surprise to both of us that our responsibilities and problems are so similar and that the few differences were only minor.—WCO Gordon Couillard, Clarion.

### They Should Have

**SOMERSET COUNTY**—I was interviewing a suspect in a bear case and it was obvious he knew that the penalties for shooting a bear at night, over bait, with the use of an artificial light, include the forfeiture of equipment used. (He or one of his accomplices had actually contacted the agency beforehand to find out.) They were especially concerned because they had used an artificial light from a camp bedroom, and they were afraid they were going to lose their camp.—WCO Clifford E. Guindon, Jr., Boswell.

### And No Quick Draws

**CAMERON COUNTY**—Generations ago an aspiring shooter attended the Western Super Quick Draw Gunslinger School. While on a weekend pass he happened into a saloon and spied his lifelong idol enjoying a quiet drink. "Mr. Earp," the young man asked, "how can I improve my draw?" Wyatt suggested the young man cant his gun butt a little to the rear. The man did and then promptly shot the cuff link off the piano player's right sleeve. Tickled pink, the man asked, "Mr. Earp, would you please give me another tip?" The marshall then advised him to tie his holster to his leg. The tyro did and then, in an even faster draw, shot off the piano player's left cuff link. Greatly enthused, the man begged for a third tip, but his hero replied, "No, better not. That piano player is Doc Holiday, and he gets real mad when anybody shoots at him." The moral of the story is as true today as ever: Always be sure of your target.—WCO Joe Carlos, Driftwood.



### Inconspicuous

**LYCOMING COUNTY**—It's amazing how well wild animals can flourish around people. Last winter I found two bear dens, each containing a female with three cubs, close to some homes and yet not one person knew they were there.—WCO Daniel Marks, Williamsport.



## Big Demand

Although they endured wet feet because of thin ice, the Mercer County Food and Cover Crew found the following species had used the area's 176 nest boxes: wood ducks, mergansers, screech owls, several kinds of songbirds and a squirrel. Such use just proves the need to save large dead trees for wildlife.—LMO James E. Deniker, Sandy Lake.

## Name of the Game

**CLEARFIELD COUNTY**—After teaching sportsmanship for so long, Hunter-Trapper Education Instructor Gerry Bortz became a student last year. He and his brother Kenny were admiring a 9-point Kenny had just tagged, but they were also wondering how they were going to get it out of the woods and to Gerry's house a mile away. While they were contemplating their dilemma, John Tokarick and his partner showed up, and before either Gerry or Kenny knew what was happening, the two men carried the trophy to John's pickup, told the Bortzs to hop in, and then delivered them to Gerry's front door. A "thank you" was all the two would accept in return. As Gerry told me later, "I know sportsmanship is not a thing of the past, that it's alive and well, and that all the efforts of our hunter-trapper education instructors are paying off in more ways than we'll ever know."—WCO Colleen Shannon, Luthersburg.

## Holding Steady

On March 23 Gary Alt and his assistants examined a tagged female bear I had located on Locust Mountain, Schuylkill County. The bear was 14 years old, weighed 166 pounds, and had three cubs, two males and a female, that weighed about five pounds each. Apparently this bear has been eating a proper and balanced diet, because in 1978, when Gary first weighed this bear, she weighed 162 pounds and had two cubs.—LMO Stephen L. Opet, Tamaqua.



## Skunk Man

**LUZERNE COUNTY**—Nuisance wildlife trapper Robert Zygmunt, Avoca, handled 132 skunk and almost 40 opossum complaints last year.—WCO Edward J. Zindell, Wilkes-Barre.

## Part of the Job

**FRANKLIN COUNTY**—When Farm-Game cooperator Gerald Eberly called about a beaver in a trap I was surprised and suspicious because beavers weren't known to be in the area. I quickly found the beaver but I left it in the trap and staked out the site, thinking I might find an after-season muskrat or raccoon trapper (beavers were still in season). When I figured the 36-hour trap visitation period was up I enlisted the help of Bob Daihl to help me remove the animal. When we returned to the site, however, the beaver was gone and the trap had been reset. I returned to my vehicle to get my hipboots so I could check the trap, but when I got there I couldn't find my keys. Then I remembered hearing a splash while crossing a railroad trestle; at the time I thought it was a stone falling. I got a ride home and grabbed a jar to use to peer into the stream and locate my keys. I returned and Bob and I retrieved my keys, after which I swore him to secrecy about our smooth operation. I met the trapper the next morning and congratulated him on his unusual catch.—WCO Frank Clark, Fayetteville.

## Misinformed

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY**—A man recently showed me a video tape of two fishers in his backyard. The animals were woodchucks. That same month I investigated a complaint about a raccoon that turned out to be an opossum, an opossum that turned out to be a muskrat, and a wolverine that was actually a groundhog. Each of the callers got a good look at the animal they reported, but none of them could identify what they were seeing.—WCO William Wasserman, Montgomeryville.

## Early Spring

**PERRY COUNTY**—I saw two gobblers strutting their stuff on February 11, the earliest date I've ever seen them do their thing. Both were young toms, possibly just practicing. I also saw my first roadkilled woodchuck of the year on that date.—WCO LeRoy Everett, Newport.



## Big Appetite

**SOMERSET COUNTY**—I recently received a call about an owl with a broken wing, sitting on a sidewalk in Myersdale. I arrived and found, sure enough, a gray phase screech owl and there was, indeed, a wing sticking up at an odd angle. But when I got closer I found the owl wasn't injured; it was sitting on a dead pigeon, nearly as big as the owl itself.—WCO John G. Smith, Salisbury.

## Worth Trying

Farm-Game Manager Roger Romesburg was checking bluebird boxes on Farm-Game Projects in Somerset County when he noticed an old mail box, painted blue and left open. A robin was nesting inside. Next to the mailbox was a bluebird box and it, too, had been painted blue. The owners of the farm, Mr & Mrs Forrest Yoder, reported that the bluebird box had been used three times in 1986 and three times in 1987, and that 14 young fledged from it in each year. That makes the Yoders the most successful cooperator in the county and leaves me wondering if we should be painting all our boxes blue.—LMO Barry K. Ray, Sr., Rockwood.

## He'll Learn

**BRADFORD COUNTY**—A week after Dave Rutowski, Superintendent of Mt. Pisgah State Park, presented a program at a local elementary school, he received a thank you note from each student. One letter went like this: Thank you for the maps and all the information. I would like to be a ranger like you when I grow up, but I'll probably have to get a job and work for a living. Kids sure are observant, aren't they, Dave?—WCO Bill Bower, Troy.

## Check It Out

**McKEAN COUNTY**—If you're a landowner and enjoy reading Field Notes, consider joining one of the Game Commission's cooperative programs. In return for permitting public hunting, qualifying landowners receive trees, shrubs and seed mix for developing wildlife habitat, signs to alert visitors where they may and may not go, and, among other incentives, a GAME NEWS subscription—so they can enjoy Field Notes free of charge. If you're not among the 30,000 landowners already participating and you'd like to learn more about these programs, contact your local wildlife conservation officer.—WCO John Dzemyan, Smethport.



# Bonus Tag Regulations Adopted

**N**EW REGULATIONS proposed by the Pennsylvania Game Commission will allow sportsmen holding proper licenses and tags to harvest two deer this year. Formally proposed in April, the two-deer program was adopted during the Commission's June meeting in Harrisburg.

Mild winters, increasing fawn production and consecutive annual under-harvests have combined to cause deer populations in most Pennsylvania counties to exceed forest carrying capacity. In some southcentral and southwest areas, deer populations have increased steadily for several years.

Commenting on the proposed two-deer program, Commission Executive Director Peter S. Duncan stated, "Bonus antlerless tags are viewed as the most practical way to ensure that the annual antlerless license allocations are more fully utilized; that more hunters are afield during the antlerless seasons; and—most importantly—that adequate antlerless deer harvests are achieved in each county management unit.

"Consecutive mild winters, with little snow and ice, have greatly reduced over-winter mortality," said Duncan. "At the same time, fawn production rates have increased by a few percent.

"On the surface, a two or three per-



**AFTER YEARS** of having her husband disappear during deer season, Judy Horton, Erie, joined her husband in the deer woods last year and made a 90-yard shot to drop this 111-pound doe.

cent increase in fawn production might not seem like much, but applied to a deer population of more than a million, we're talking about an annual statewide increase of 20,000 to 30,000 animals. We simply can't allow such a trend to continue. To do so would be poor management, and, in the end, everybody would suffer."

Under the two-deer regulations, from October 3rd to the 24th, antlerless license allocations will be sold by county treasurers in the traditional manner. On October 24th, unsold allocations will become available to all sportsmen, over the counter or by mail, as "antlerless licenses" or "bonus tags." Two deer may be taken in a number of ways, but in all cases, hunters must purchase a bonus tag to harvest a bonus antlerless deer.

In the regular antlered and antlerless firearms seasons, a buck and an antlerless deer could be harvested, respectively, with a general license and a bonus tag. To harvest two antlerless deer, a hunter needs both an antlerless license and a bonus tag.



During the regular and extended archery seasons, hunters can still take one deer of either sex anywhere in the state. With a bonus tag, they can also take an antlerless deer (in the county) during the regular firearms or extended archery season.

Hunters with a muzzleloader stamp (purchased by September 30), can hunt for a deer of either sex, anywhere in the state, during the muzzleloader season. With a bonus tag, they can also hunt

antlerless deer, in the appropriate county, during the regular firearms and muzzleloader seasons. Hunters who didn't buy a muzzleloader stamp can purchase a "combination" license. The combination license is a bonus tag with a muzzleloader license attached, permitting the holder to hunt antlerless deer during the regular firearms and muzzleloader seasons. (Combination licenses are not valid statewide, and are not legal for antlered deer).

## 1988 ANTLERLESS ALLOCATIONS

**A**NTLERLESS LICENSE allocations approved at the April meeting of the Game Commission are designed to adjust deer populations in 58 of the state's 67 county management units.

According to Dale Sheffer, Director of the Bureau of Wildlife Management, "If the 679,300 licenses allocated for 1988 are sold and used, we look for a reported harvest of over 92,000 antlerless deer, about 7000 more than were reported last year. We must rely on hunters to help reduce deer herds in 39 county management units. Populations should increase in 19 others, and stabilize in the remaining nine counties.

"Currently, deer populations in 54 counties are above goals," said Sheffer. "The goals, or the population densities

**CONNIE STRONG, Newfane, New York, took this deer, her first, in McKean County, in almost the same spot where her dad dropped his first whitetail 20 years earlier.**



we're trying to reach, are based on how many deer can be adequately sustained by forested habitat.

"From years of study, we know how many deer—per square mile—various forest stages can safely overwinter. But, quite frankly, in most counties, we simply haven't been able to get the herd down to where it belongs, to where it's compatible with existing forest habitat.

"Certainly it's difficult for everyone to accept, but it's a fact that there are too many deer in most counties, and there are a number of reasons why Pennsylvania's deer herd is increasing.

"We set allocations to harvest the right numbers of deer, but in recent years thousands of licenses have gone unsold and unused. We have difficulty with access, places where hunters can't get on private and public lands where we're having the most problems. We've also gone through seven consecutive relatively mild winters in which we've seen overwinter mortality drop dramatically.

"At the same time," said Sheffer, "reproduction rates have increased slightly. A small increase in fawn production might appear insignificant, but when we're dealing with a pre-season deer population calculated at 1.2 million, we're looking at an annual statewide increase of 20,000 to 30,000 deer. This upward spiral simply can't go on forever without seriously jeopardizing our entire management program."



According to Biologist Bill Palmer, even hunter success ratios have changed. Palmer, who coordinates the deer management program, contends that today, on average, it takes about 25 percent more licenses to harvest an antlerless deer than it did several years ago.

As the 1988 allocation was approved, Commission President C. Dana Chalfant said he wanted it clearly understood, "The deer management program is the result of excellent work and com-

mitment by many dedicated Game Commission professionals. The 1988 antlerless allocation we approved is based solely on the need to reduce the state deer herd; it was not influenced by financial gain or by any policies or people outside this agency—timber interests, farmers, insurance companies or anyone else."

Following are the 1988 county allocations, anticipated harvests, and the planned changes in the 1988 post-season deer populations.

ANTLERLESS DEER LICENSE  
ALLOCATIONS FOR 1988

| County     | Allocation | Harvest | % Change |
|------------|------------|---------|----------|
| Adams      | 10,500     | 1,178   | -2.9     |
| Allegheny  | 10,600     | 825     | 0.0      |
| Armstrong  | 11,000     | 1,670   | 0.0      |
| Beaver     | 4,650      | 392     | + 6.1    |
| Bedford    | 9,900      | 1,245   | + 9.4    |
| Berks      | 17,250     | 2,488   | 0.0      |
| Blair      | 14,850     | 1,723   | -5.0     |
| Bradford   | 16,500     | 3,098   | -5.0     |
| Bucks      | 12,800     | 1,368   | -10.0    |
| Butler     | 11,300     | 1,683   | -4.9     |
| Cambria    | 8,950      | 1,436   | + 0.1    |
| Cameron    | 9,400      | 1,347   | -5.0     |
| Carbon     | 4,500      | 500     | + 2.7    |
| Centre     | 18,350     | 2,258   | -2.5     |
| Chester    | 12,350     | 936     | + 0.1    |
| Clarion    | 11,400     | 1,699   | -5.0     |
| Clearfield | 14,850     | 1,944   | 0.0      |
| Clinton    | 14,000     | 1,633   | -3.9     |
| Columbia   | 9,600      | 1,697   | -5.0     |
| Crawford   | 9,900      | 1,681   | + 6.0    |
| Cumberland | 7,400      | 606     | -3.1     |
| Dauphin    | 7,900      | 1,036   | -1.4     |
| Delaware   | 1,200      | 103     | -20.8    |
| Elk        | 13,500     | 1,644   | -0.7     |
| Erie       | 7,600      | 1,180   | -0.1     |
| Fayette    | 5,950      | 587     | + 13.8   |
| Forest     | 10,900     | 1,902   | -0.9     |
| Franklin   | 7,050      | 990     | -4.9     |
| Fulton     | 5,150      | 561     | + 8.2    |
| Greene     | 9,950      | 1,318   | -5.0     |
| Huntingdon | 19,400     | 2,359   | 0.0      |
| Indiana    | 11,400     | 1,582   | + 4.3    |
| Jefferson  | 11,550     | 1,804   | 0.0      |
| Juniata    | 8,000      | 749     | + 1.5    |
| Lackawanna | 3,300      | 428     | + 1.5    |
| Lancaster  | 9,300      | 993     | 0.0      |
| Lawrence   | 2,050      | 156     | + 20.1   |
| Lebanon    | 6,300      | 592     | -4.9     |

Continued

|                |         |        |        |
|----------------|---------|--------|--------|
| Lehigh         | 5,950   | 811    | -5.1   |
| Luzerne        | 11,000  | 1,920  | -4.5   |
| Lycoming       | 16,900  | 1,775  | + 1.5  |
| McKean         | 15,800  | 2,441  | -5.0   |
| Mercer         | 6,900   | 885    | + 2.6  |
| Mifflin        | 8,900   | 851    | -2.3   |
| Monroe         | 6,000   | 708    | + 1.7  |
| Montgomery     | 4,100   | 451    | -5.2   |
| Montour        | 2,200   | 299    | -4.6   |
| Northampton    | 6,200   | 740    | -4.5   |
| Northumberland | 7,600   | 975    | -4.6   |
| Perry          | 12,600  | 1,435  | -5.0   |
| Philadelphia   | 500     | 39     | + 12.7 |
| Pike           | 8,000   | 994    | -5.3   |
| Potter         | 18,700  | 3,756  | -9.6   |
| Schuylkill     | 13,500  | 2,455  | -2.8   |
| Snyder         | 3,100   | 443    | + 0.4  |
| Somerset       | 13,200  | 2,463  | 0.0    |
| Sullivan       | 6,500   | 1,257  | -7.1   |
| Susquehanna    | 10,200  | 1,728  | -5.0   |
| Tioga          | 19,500  | 3,330  | -5.0   |
| Union          | 4,850   | 661    | 0.0    |
| Venango        | 11,900  | 2,364  | -0.7   |
| Warren         | 17,200  | 2,609  | -1.0   |
| Washington     | 18,800  | 2,260  | -5.0   |
| Wayne          | 12,850  | 1,522  | -5.0   |
| Westmoreland   | 18,150  | 2,128  | + 1.7  |
| Wyoming        | 4,750   | 649    | -4.8   |
| York           | 12,900  | 1,232  | + 3.5  |
| STATE TOTALS   | 679,300 | 92,571 | -2.0   |

## Taxidermy Exam Scheduled

A TAXIDERMY examination, the Agency's second of the year, will be held September 19, 20 and 21 at the Game Commission's southcentral region office at Huntingdon. Exam applications are available from wildlife con-

servation officers. Completed applications must be returned to officers by September 1.

J. R. Fagan, Director of the Bureau of Law Enforcement, noted, "Before doing taxidermy work for others a person must have a permit issued by the Game Commission. Applicants must be state residents at least 18 years old.

"The taxidermy examination consists of three parts," Fagan explains. "Primarily, and most important, is the presentation of five specimens the applicant has prepared within the last three years. Required specimens include an antlered whitetail deer head, a small mammal, pheasant, grouse, bobwhite quail or tur-

**THE GAME Commission regulates taxidermy so sportsmen can rest assured that their priceless trophies will be cared for and mounted properly.**





key, a duck or other waterfowl, and a fish. Birds must be mounted with feet and legs visible, and all specimens must be representative of wildlife found in Pennsylvania."

The second part of the exam concerns taxidermy methods and procedures. "This helps the taxidermy board determine if an applicant is actually aware of correct taxidermy methods," said Fagan. "Questions involving state and federal laws regarding all wildlife (including fish) may be included, as well as questions on natural history."

The third part of the examination requires applicants to actually perform some part of the taxidermy process on a selected specimen. Passing scores must

be attained on all three parts of the examination.

"Taxidermists must be sufficiently skilled so a person with an irreplaceable trophy can confidently leave it with any commercial taxidermist, knowing the specimen will be cared for properly, mounted, and returned as a permanent reminder of the successful hunting or fishing trip," Fagan concluded.

Prior to 1987, only one taxidermy exam was given annually, but a flood of applications and a lengthy waiting period led the Game Commission to schedule a second exam this year.

There are over 600 licensed taxidermists in the state, more than double the number just seven years ago.

# 1988 Seasons and Bag Limits

SEASONS AND BAG LIMITS follow traditional formats with only a few notable changes: separate furtaking zones were eliminated; later furtaking seasons established; and Turkey Management Area 2 was split into two sections, designated 2-A and 2-B. I-80 and a short section of Route 322 divide the two.

Area 2-A will have a one-week fall season, beginning October 29. Sections of Clarion, Jefferson and Clearfield counties in Area 2-B will also have a one-week season. Those sections of Armstrong, Butler, Indiana, Lawrence, Mercer, and Venango counties in Area 2-B, however, will be closed to fall turkey hunting.

## PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION SEASONS AND BAG LIMITS 1988-1989

The Pennsylvania Game Commission, in Harrisburg on April 5, 1988, established the following seasons and bag limits for resident game and furbearers for the 1988-89 hunting license year which begins July 1.

Open seasons include first and last dates listed, Sundays excepted, for game. The opening hour for small game, migratory game birds and other wild birds or animals (except waterfowl in the Lake Erie Zone) on October 29 will be 9:00 a.m. Shooting hours for other days and seasons will be from one-half hour before sunrise until sunset, except turkey gobblers (spring season) from one-half hour before sunrise until 11:00 a.m.; raccoons, which may be hunted any hour except during the firearms deer seasons when the hours are from sunset to one-half hour before sunrise; and woodchucks, coyotes, opossums, skunks, and weasels, which may not be hunted before noon April 22-May 20. Seasons and shooting hours for migratory birds will be announced later.

| <i>Field Possession Limit</i> |              |  | DATES OF OPEN SEASONS |  |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--|-----------------------|--|
| <i>Daily Limit</i>            | <i>Limit</i> |  | <i>First Day</i>      | <i>Last Day</i>                                |
| 6                             | 12           | SMALL GAME   |                       |  |
|                               |              | Squirrels, Gray, Black, Red and Fox (combined) . . . . . | Oct. 15 . . . . .     | Nov. 26 AND<br>Dec. 26 . . . . . Jan. 21, 1989 |

*Continued*

| Daily<br>Limit | Field<br>Possession<br>Limit | SMALL GAME   | DATES OF<br>OPEN SEASONS |  |
|----------------|------------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|
|                |                              |  | First Day                | Last Day                                       |
| 2              | 4                            | Ruffed Grouse (Statewide) . . . . .                    | Oct. 15 . . . . .        | Nov. 26 AND<br>Dec. 26 . . . . . Jan. 7, 1989  |
|                |                              | (In 55 counties)* . . . . .                            | Jan. 9 . . . . .         | Jan. 21, 1989                                  |
| 4              | 8                            | Rabbits, Cottontail . . . . .                          | Oct. 29 . . . . .        | Nov. 26 AND<br>Dec. 26 . . . . . Jan. 21, 1989 |
| 2              | 4                            | Ring-necked Pheasants, males only (Except in . . . . . | Oct. 29 . . . . .        | Nov. 26  |
|                |                              | designated area)** . . . . .                           |                          |  |
|                |                              | —both sexes in designated area** . . . . .             | Dec. 26 . . . . .        | Jan. 7, 1989                                   |
| 4              | 8                            | Bobwhite Quail (In 54 counties)*** . . . . .           | Oct. 29 . . . . .        | Nov. 26  |

| Daily<br>Limit | Season<br>Limit |  | DATES OF<br>OPEN SEASONS |               |
|----------------|-----------------|--|--------------------------|---------------|
|                |                 |  | First Day                | Last Day      |
| 2              | 4               | Hares (Snowshoe Rabbits) or Varying Hares . . . . .  | Dec. 26 . . . . .        | Dec. 31       |
|                | Unlimited       | Woodchucks (Groundhogs)#—No Sunday Hunting . . . . . | July 1 . . . . .         | June 30, 1989 |

#### FURBEARERS AND COYOTES—HUNTING

|           |   |                  |               |
|-----------|---|------------------|---------------|
| Unlimited | Foxes—Red and Gray—Statewide# . . . . .       | Nov. 3 . . . . . | Feb. 25, 1989 |
| Unlimited | Skunks, Opossums, Weasels, Coyotes# . . . . . | July 1 . . . . . | June 30, 1989 |
| Unlimited | Raccoons—Statewide# . . . . .                 | Nov. 3 . . . . . | Feb. 11, 1989 |

#### BIG GAME

|   |   |   |  |              |
|---|---|---|--|--------------|
| 1 | 1 | Wild Turkey—Management Area No. 1 + . . . . .                       | Closed to Fall hunting except<br>open Crawford Co. and Erie<br>Co. east of I-79 and south<br>of I-90<br>Oct. 29 . . . . . Nov. 5 |              |
|   |   | —Management Area No. 2-A + . . . . .                                | Oct. 29 . . . . .  | Nov. 5       |
|   |   | —Management Area No. 2-B + . . . . .                                | Oct. 29 . . . . .  | Nov. 5       |
|   |   |   | in 3 counties;<br>closed in 6 counties   |              |
|   |   | —Management Area No. 3 & 4 + . . . . .                              | Oct. 29 . . . . .  | Nov. 19      |
|   |   | —Management Area No. 5, 6, 7 & 8 + . . . . .                        | Oct. 29 . . . . .  | Nov. 12      |
|   |   | —Management Area No. 9 + . . . . .                                  | Closed to Fall hunting   |              |
|   |   | —Spring Gobbler Season (Bearded Birds<br>Only, Statewide) . . . . . | April 22 . . . . .   | May 20, 1989 |
| 1 | 1 | Bear—by individual—Statewide . . . . .                              | Nov. 21 . . . . .  | Nov. 23      |

| Daily<br>Limit   | Season<br>Limit | BIG GAME (CONT'D)   | DATES OF<br>OPEN SEASONS |   |
|--|-----------------|---|--------------------------|---|
|  |                 |   | First Day                | Last Day                                      |
| 1 antlered or<br>1 antlerless<br>deer during<br>license year |                 | Deer, Archery Season, any deer—Statewide . . . . .            | Oct. 1 . . . . .         | Oct. 28 AND<br>Dec. 26 . . . . . Jan. 7, 1989 |
|  |                 | Deer, Antlered, with 2 or more points to an antler . . . . .  | Nov. 28 . . . . .        | Dec. 10                                       |
|  |                 | or a spike 3 or more inches long—Statewide . . . . .          |                          |   |
|  |                 | Deer, Antlerless, with required antlerless license, . . . . . | Nov. 28 . . . . .        | Jan. 7, 1989                                  |
|  |                 | Special Regulations Area listed below + + . . . . .           |                          |   |
| Bonus deer<br>with bonus tag                                 |                 | Deer, Antlerless—Statewide . . . . .                          | Dec. 12 . . . . .        | Dec. 14                                       |
|  |                 | Deer, Flintlock Season, any deer—Statewide . . . . .          | Dec. 26 . . . . .        | Jan. 7, 1989                                  |

#### NON-GAME BIRDS

|           |   |                  |                                  |               |
|-----------|---|------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|
| Unlimited | Crows (Hunting on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays Only) . . . . . | July 1 . . . . . | Nov. 20 AND<br>Dec. 23 . . . . . | April 9, 1989 |
|-----------|---|------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|

#### TRAPPING

|           |   |                   |               |
|-----------|---|-------------------|---------------|
| Unlimited | Raccoons, Skunks, Opossums, Foxes, Weasels, Coyotes . . . . . | Nov. 3 . . . . .  | Feb. 11, 1989 |
| Unlimited | Minks . . . . .   | Nov. 24 . . . . . | Dec. 24       |
| Unlimited | Muskrats . . . . .  | Nov. 24 . . . . . | Dec. 24       |
| 6         | Beavers—In 64 counties . . . . .                              | Dec. 21 . . . . . | Mar. 5, 1989  |
| 12        | Beavers—Pike, Susquehanna, Wayne Counties . . . . .           | Dec. 21 . . . . . | Mar. 5, 1989  |

NO OPEN SEASON—Elk, Otters, Pine Martens, Fishers, Hungarian Partridges, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Bobcat or Wildcat.

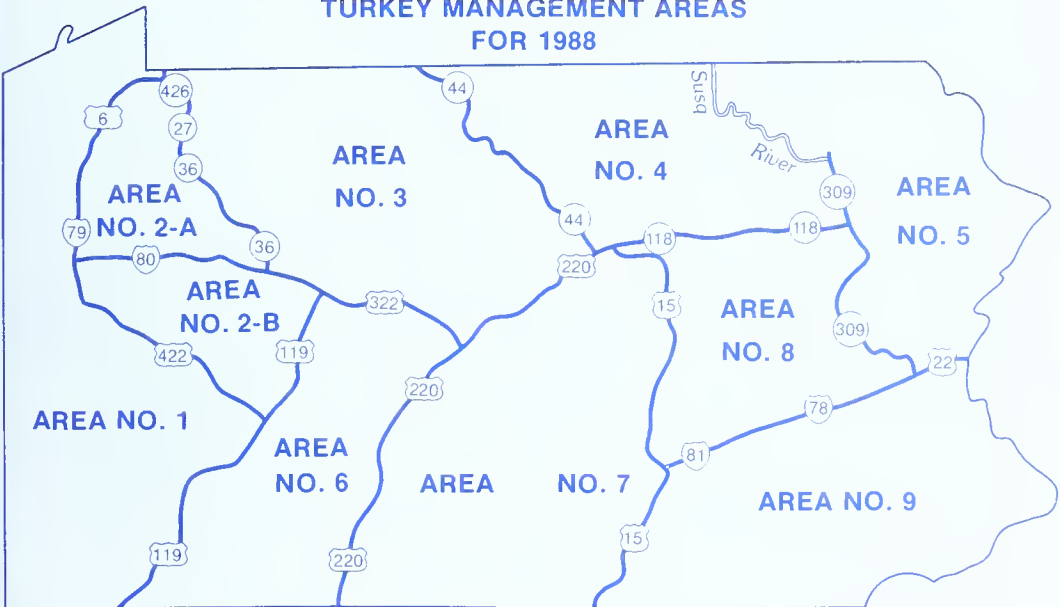
FALCONRY SEASON—Details of this season will be disseminated to licensed falconers.



## SPECIAL REGULATIONS

- # During the regular antlered and antlerless deer seasons Nov. 28–Dec. 10 and Dec. 12–14, and any extension thereof, it shall be unlawful to hunt any other wild bird or animal (except coyotes prior to harvesting a deer) from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset—migratory waterfowl and game birds on regulated shooting grounds are excepted; hunting during spring turkey season April 22–May 20 for coyotes, opossums, skunks, weasels, groundhogs prohibited before 12 noon. Furbearers may not be hunted on Sunday.
- \* Grouse hunting permitted Jan. 9–21 in all counties except Berks, Bedford, Butler, Centre, Clarion, Dauphin, Fayette, Huntingdon, Indiana, McKean, Monroe and Susquehanna, where the season is closed.
- \*\* *Designated Area for Male and Female Pheasants*—East of Ohio and north of Interstate Route 80 to Route 220, north of Route 220 from Interstate Route 80 to Route 118, north of Routes 118 and 415 from Route 220 to Route 309, north and east of Route 309 from Route 118 to Interstate Route 80, and north of Interstate Route 80 from Route 309 to the New Jersey line. No pheasant hunting in Mercer County west of Interstate Route 79.
- \*\*\* Bobwhite quail hunting permitted Oct. 29–Nov. 26 in all counties except Adams, Chester, Cumberland, Dauphin, Delaware, Franklin, Fulton, Juniata, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, Snyder and York, where the season is closed.

### TURKEY MANAGEMENT AREAS FOR 1988



- + Turkey Management Area 1—Bounded on the north by Lake Erie; on the east and north by the New York State line, by Route 426 from the New York State line to Route 6, by 6 from 426 to I-79, by I-79 from 6 to Route 422, by 422 from I-79 to Route 119, and by 119 from 422 to the West Virginia State line; on the south by the West Virginia State line; on the west by the West Virginia and Ohio State lines.
- + Turkey Management Area 2-A—Bounded on the west and north by Route 6 from I-79 to Route 426; on the east by 426 from 6 to Route 27, by 27 from 426 to Route 36, and by 36 from 27 to Route 322; on the south by 322 from 36 to I-80, and I-80 from 322 to I-79; and on the west by I-79 from I-80 to Route 6.
- + Turkey Management Area 2-B—Bounded on the north by I-80 from I-79 to Route 322, and by 322 from I-80 to Route 119; on the east by 119 from 322 to Route 422; on the south by 422 from 119 to I-79; and on the west by I-79 from 422 to I-80. Those parts of Clarion, Jefferson and Clearfield Counties in this area open to Fall hunting Oct. 29—Nov. 5; those parts of Butler, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango, Armstrong and Indiana Counties in this area closed to Fall hunting.

- + Turkey Management Area 3—Bounded on the north by the New York State line; on the east by Route 44 from the New York State line to Route 220, and 220 from 44 to Route 322; on the south by 322 from 220 to Route 36; on the west by 36 from 322 to Route 27, by 27 from 36 to Route 426, and by 426 from 27 to the New York State line.
- + Turkey Management Area 4—Bounded on the north by the New York State line; on the east by the Susquehanna River from the New York State line to Route 309, and by 309 from the Susquehanna River to Route 118; on the south by Route 118 from 309 to Route 220, and by 220 from 118 to Route 44; on the west by Route 44 from 220 to the New York State line.
- + Turkey Management Area 5—Bounded on the north by the New York State line; on the east by the Delaware River; on the south by Route 22 from the Delaware River to Route 309; on the west by 309 from 22 to the Susquehanna River, and by the Susquehanna River from 309 to the New York State line.
- + Turkey Management Area 6—Bounded on the north by Route 322 from Route 119 to Route 220; on the east by 220 from 322 to the Maryland State line; on the south by the Maryland and West Virginia State lines; on the west by 119 from the West Virginia State line to 322.
- + Turkey Management Area 7—Bounded on the west and north by Route 220 from the Maryland State line to Route 15; on the east by 15 from 220 to the Maryland State line; on the south by the Maryland State line.
- + Turkey Management Area 8—Bounded on the north by Route 220 from Route 15 to Route 118, and by 118 from 220 to Route 309; on the east by 309 from 118 to Route 22; on the south by 22, I-78 and I-81 from 309 to 15; on the west by 15 from I-81 to 220.
- + Turkey Management Area 9—Bounded on the north by I-81, I-78 and Route 22 from Route 15 to the Delaware River; on the east by the Delaware River; on the south by the Delaware and Maryland State lines; on the west by 15 from the Maryland State line to I-81.
- + + *Special Regulations Area—Southwestern Pennsylvania—Allegheny County—Only bow and arrow, shotguns not smaller than 20 gauge with rifled slugs or punkin balls and muzzleloading long guns may be used for taking deer in Allegheny County. Manually operated .22 caliber rimfire rifles and handguns may be used for small game (except spring gobbler season), furbearers which may lawfully be hunted, crows, and while trapping. Special Regulations Area—Southeastern Pennsylvania—Only bow and arrow, shotguns not smaller than 20 gauge with buckshot, rifled slugs or punkin balls and muzzleloading long guns may be used for taking deer in that part of southeastern Pennsylvania bounded by the following: Beginning at the Delaware River at Point Pleasant, southwest on the Point Pleasant Pike and Ferry Road to Route 413, northwest on Route 413 to Route 611, northwest on Route 611 to Route 412, north on Route 412 to Route 563, southwest on Route 563 to Route 313, northwest on Route 313 to Route 309, southwest on Route 663 from Route 309 to Route 73, west on Route 73 to Route 100, south on Route 100 to Route 30, west on Route 30 to Route 82, south on Route 82 to Route 1, west on Route 1 to Route 41, and southeast on Route 41 to the Delaware line, including Ridley Creek State Park, Delaware County, and Tyler State Park, Bucks County (muzzleloading long guns and shotguns with rifled slugs or punkin balls may not be used to take deer in Ridley Creek State Park or Philadelphia County). Manually operated .22 caliber rimfire rifles and handguns may be used while trapping to dispatch legally-caught animals. While hunting, use or possession of single projectile ammunition at any time other than specified above is prohibited in both Special Regulations Areas.*



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HUNTING LICENSE APPLICATION

(Certified Check or Money Order in US Currency Required for Mail Orders from Nonresidents)

| LICENSE FEES ARE NOT REFUNDABLE<br>Check Type(s) Desired In Block | Agent Write In<br>Stamp Number                         | Agent Write In<br>Stamp Number |
|---|--|--------------------------------|
| Res. Ad. (17-64 yrs.) <input type="checkbox"/> \$12.75            | Res. Ad. Furtakers <input type="checkbox"/> \$12.75    |                                |
| Res. Jr. (12-16 yrs.) <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 5.75            | Res. Jr. Furtakers <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 5.75    |                                |
| Res. Sr. (65 yrs. & older) <input type="checkbox"/> \$10.75       | Res. Sr. Furtakers <input type="checkbox"/> \$10.75    |                                |
| Nonres. (Hunt) <input type="checkbox"/> \$80.75                   | Nonres. Ad. Furtakers <input type="checkbox"/> \$80.75 |                                |
| Nonres. Jr. (Hunt) <input type="checkbox"/> \$40.75               | Nonres. Jr. Furtakers <input type="checkbox"/> \$40.75 |                                |
| **Muzzleloader <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 5.50                   | **(Cannot be purchased after September 30th)           |                                |
| Archery <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 5.50                          |  |                                |

5-day Nonresident Small Game (Includes Waterfowl) Valid From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_ \$15.50

\*Resident Disabled War Veterans Claim No. \_\_\_\_\_ Free ☐ Claim No. \_\_\_\_\_

ALL MAIL ORDERS — Add \$.75 POSTAGE \_\_\_\_\_ Furtakers Back Tag No. \_\_\_\_\_

\*Available only from County Treasurers TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_ Hunting Back Tag No. \_\_\_\_\_

PRINT PLAINLY

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(First) (Middle Initial) (Last) (Occupation)

Legal Residence \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street or R.F.D.)

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ (Zip Code)

(County of Residence) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No. ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Area Code) (Official Use, PGC Only)

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_  
Hair \_\_\_\_\_ Eyes \_\_\_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_\_\_ Height \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Place of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
(Post Office) (State) (Nation) Resident of Pennsylvania since \_\_\_\_\_

I present the following as evidence that I have completed the required hunter education course or have held a prior hunting license: or I am currently serving in the Armed Forces or have been discharged under honorable conditions within 6 mo. of application.

Hunter Education Training Certificate or Military Papers \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

A prior hunting license from \_\_\_\_\_  
(State or Nation) Year \_\_\_\_\_ License# \_\_\_\_\_

I am unable to produce a prior hunting license, but certify below that I did hold a hunting license issued by \_\_\_\_\_  
(State or Nation)

Agents Not Responsible for Licenses lost by Mailing.  
Mail Application and correct amount of fee (Include \$.75 postage) to the **PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION, LICENSE DIVISION, 2001 ELMERTON AVENUE, HARRISBURG, PA. 17110-9797. (DO NOT SEND STAMPS).** All applicants must present proof of Hunter Education Training or prior hunting license. (Preferably a photostatic copy). 5-day Nonresident Small Game License not valid for turkey or big game. Mail orders for Resident Hunting Licenses must include positive proof of residency in this Commonwealth.

CERTIFICATION OF CORRECTNESS

I certify that all of the above information and documents presented are true and correct and that my hunting privileges are not revoked for this license year.

(X) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)  
(Signature of Applicant plus parent or guardian for persons under age 17)

I hereby certify that applicant has properly identified himself/herself and in my opinion is entitled to license(s) listed.

Signature of Issuing Agent \_\_\_\_\_

## Game Commission Publications & Items

| Quantity | Books   | Price    |
|----------|---|----------|
| _____    | BIRDS OF PENNSYLVANIA, by James & Lillian Wakeley .....   | \$ 10.00 |
| _____    | THE WINGLESS CROW, by Charles Fergus .....                | \$ 10.00 |
| _____    | PENNSYLVANIA BIG GAME RECORDS, 1965-1986 .....            | \$ 10.00 |
| _____    | MAMMALS OF PENNSYLVANIA, by J. Kenneth Doult, et al ..... | \$ 4.00  |
| _____    | GONE FOR THE DAY, by Ned Smith .....                      | \$ 4.00  |
| _____    | PENNSYLVANIA WILD GAME COOKBOOK .....                     | \$ 4.00  |
| _____    | DUCKS AT A DISTANCE .....                                 | \$ 1.00  |
| _____    | WOODLANDS AND WILDLIFE .....                              | \$ 2.00  |
| _____    | PENNSYLVANIA TRAPPING MANUAL, by Paul Failor .....        | \$ 3.00  |

### Working Together for Wildlife Collectibles

|       |   |          |
|-------|---|----------|
| _____ | 1988 ART PRINT "Snowy Egret" .....          | \$125.00 |
| _____ | 1987 ART PRINT "Autumn Challenge" .....     | \$125.00 |
| _____ | 1986 ART PRINT "Country Lane Kestrel" ..... | \$125.00 |
| _____ | 1988 SNOWY EGRET PATCH .....                | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1987 ELK PATCH .....                        | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1987 ELK DECAL .....                        | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1986 KESTREL PATCH .....                    | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1986 KESTREL DECAL .....                    | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1985 BOBCAT PATCH .....                     | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1985 BOBCAT DECAL .....                     | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1984 BLUEBIRD PATCH .....                   | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1984 BLUEBIRD DECAL .....                   | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1983 OTTER DECAL .....                      | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1982 OSPREY DECAL .....                     | \$ 1.00  |
| _____ | 1981 FLYING SQUIRREL PATCH .....            | \$ 3.00  |
| _____ | 1981 FLYING SQUIRREL DECAL .....            | \$ 1.00  |

### Wildlife Management Areas

|       |                                    |         |
|-------|------------------------------------|---------|
| _____ | PYMATUNING WATERFOWL PATCH .....   | \$ 2.00 |
| _____ | PYMATUNING WATERFOWL DECAL .....   | \$ 1.00 |
| _____ | MIDDLE CREEK WATERFOWL PATCH ..... | \$ 2.00 |
| _____ | MIDDLE CREEK WATERFOWL DECAL ..... | \$ 1.00 |

### Pennsylvania Bird and Mammal Charts

|       |   |         |
|-------|---|---------|
| _____ | Set 1 (4 charts) 20" x 30" .....                                    | \$ 4.00 |
| _____ | Set 2 (4 charts) 20" x 30" .....                                    | \$ 4.00 |
| _____ | Set 3 (8 charts) 11" x 14" .....                                    | \$ 4.00 |
| _____ | GAME NEWS Cover Prints (4 by Ned Smith) 11" x 14" .....             | \$ 4.00 |
| _____ | State Symbols Chart 20" x 30" (Deer, Grouse, Hemlock, Laurel) ..... | \$ 2.00 |

### SPORT Items

|       |                                       |         |
|-------|---------------------------------------|---------|
| _____ | Bronze SPORT Tie-Tac/Lapel Pin .....  | \$ 3.50 |
| _____ | SPORT Patch .....                     | \$ 1.00 |
| _____ | SPORT Hat (Adult or Youth Size) ..... | \$ 4.00 |

### GAME NEWS

|       |  |         |
|-------|--|---------|
| _____ | GAME NEWS Binder (Holds 12 Issues) ..... | \$ 5.00 |
|-------|--|---------|

### Waterfowl Management Stamps (Voluntary)

|       |  |         |
|-------|--|---------|
| _____ | 1988 Waterfowl Management Duck Stamp ..... | \$ 5.50 |
| _____ | 1987 Waterfowl Management Duck Stamp ..... | \$ 5.50 |
| _____ | 1986 Waterfowl Management Duck Stamp ..... | \$ 5.50 |

Mail orders along with remittance to Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797. Checks should be made payable to Pennsylvania Game Commission.

DO NOT SEND CASH

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_



# How Ironic

**A**T MY SHOT, the bird went down. I paused to eject the spent shell and ratchet another into the chamber, but more by training than necessity. It was a good head shot. That doesn't mean I didn't hurry over to where my big gobbler lay, but I wasn't as quick as my hunting companion/husband. He already had the dead, but still flopping, bird in hand and was grinning widely. I was happy, too, that I'd gotten the tom, and his "You did it, babel!" and quick kiss made it even better. But I was surprised to find another sentiment in me as well. I was sad.

I realized my spring turkey hunting was over for the year, all the soft pink dawns and the heart-thump when a gobbler sounded. I knew, also, that I had just killed a magnificent bird that seconds before had strutted for me in all his spread-fan glory. What I felt, the mixture of joy and regret, isn't unusual among hunters. We all experience both the elation and the sadness of success.

We hunters live from season to season, shot to shot, between the gobbler or buck we take one year and the one we'll bag the next. For some of us, anticipation of the hunt is a daily thing. We read about it, talk about it, plan for it for months. Then it's here. We bring all our expertise, all our senses, instincts and effort into play because that's the way we hunt.

Every motion we make, every thought we have while hunting, has one end in sight—making a killing shot on the game animal we seek. However, most of the enjoyment is in getting there and we cherish the difficulties along the way. But that one goal is always in mind.

The catch is that at the moment the shot is good, the hunt is over. From the high point, the climax when the trigger is squeezed or the arrow released, the descent is startlingly quick. Even at the instant when we should be happiest, when all the parts of the hunt have come together and our prize is down, we feel disappointment. The hunt is

done, finished, there is no more. We find ourselves already looking forward to the next opportunity.

If we're saddened by that part of the hunt, then why do it? Why take the killing shot that ends it all? That is something that lies at the heart of what it means to hunt. It's what makes hunting so hard to compare to other sports, like golf and baseball. The killing shot is simply the natural end to what the hunter begins. It is a completion to the whole without which hunting would be merely something else; it is inseparable from the hunting experience. Of course, we can't get the meat, hide or trophy headgear without the kill, but these are secondary considerations as to why we feel we must see a hunt to its appointed end.

A hunter deals directly with death. There's no getting around that part of the sport. But there is nothing wrong or unusual about a human being taking a wild animal's life. In fact, the urge to hunt may have come down through our history as an implicit part of what it means to be human. Obviously, we're not cavemen out spearing our next meal to keep from starving. But then sport hunting is as far from that as the finer nuances of romance are from the same caveman bopping a cavegirl on the head to drag her home.

The instincts are still intact, but we are now civilized. We want it to be sport or nothing. We agree to take only those game animals whose populations dic-

## Another View...

by Linda Steiner



**RICK MOTTER, Franklin, with his spring gobbler, has, like all sportsmen, learned to admire and respect the wild things we pursue.**

I believe hunters may have a better understanding and acceptance of death than most people because they have met it head on. They have seen death as it truly is, not as some dreaded abstract, and they may have found the reality is not so fearsome. When I shoot and kill game, I know very well what responsibility it is that I take on myself. I know the implication of what will happen when I tighten the trigger or relax my fingers on the bowstring. It is a conscious act, a decision not untinged with regret, that hunters have the courage to make.

The part that so many people who don't hunt can't understand is that although we kill game animals as a natural part of the hunt, it is not done gladly. Along the way, we hunters achieve an admiration and respect for these wild things, for their strengths and their physical beauty, the way they are a part of the land on which they live, their underlying mystery we can never understand.

We hunters may shoot the animal, but we do recognize the fact and we do feel sad that we have put an end to the magnificence that was this individual, be it a ringneck, rabbit or breath-taking bruin. That's why we stoop to smooth the feathers of a shining gobbler and straighten his fan, even in death. It is why we run our hands gently over the sleek, warm fur of the deer we have shot, arranging the rumpled hairs as if we were doing the service for something we loved.

To shoot, to kill the game, is as much a logical conclusion of a hunt as the final stroke of the brush on canvas is the completion to a master's painting. It is the flick of the shutter that captures a well-composed photograph, the pass over the goal line at the end of a long push downfield. How ironic, but how natural, that at this, the hunt's greatest moment, there is as much sadness to savor as the sweetness of success itself.

tate the culling of the hunt. We limit our time and hunting methods. We give the animals every opportunity of using their fleetness, reflexes and sharp senses to get away. Many times they do, of which we're secretly glad, for that is "sport" when the fox "outfoxes" us. Though we do kill, we practice it by the most humane means possible and make that our ideal.

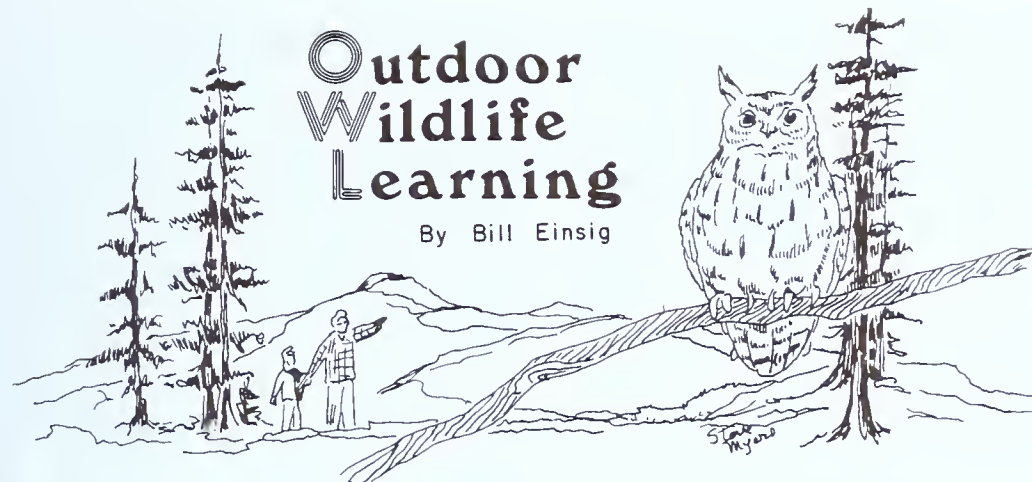
The word "harvest" is often used by hunters who kill game and, in the strictest sense, it is a wild harvest from the land we take. But we hunters are fully aware that shooting a deer is not the same as plucking a tomato off a vine. It is a flesh and blood harvest, but it is not wrong.

Occasionally after telling someone I hunt, I hear the response, "Oh, how could you? I could never shoot anything." The emphasis is always on the "I", as if their attitude made them somehow a better or more sensitive person than I am. That's ridiculous and not the point at all. I think the real reason for such an opinion is that they are afraid to face the most basic fact of life, their life, my life, a game animal's life, which is death.



# Outdoor Wildlife Learning

By Bill Einsig



## “Volunteers for Wildlife”

**T**HE 1977 conference on environmental education at Tblisi, USSR, was a landmark event for the environmental movement. That meeting spawned a host of ideas that ultimately shaped environmental education as we know it today.

Most significant, perhaps, was the hierarchy of objectives defined by conference participants. Educational offerings must begin, they said, with basic awareness and then progress through acquisition of knowledge, attitudes and skills, to the ultimate “action” stage. In other words, learners must be made aware of environmental problems, gain an understanding of them, and then develop the necessary attitudes and skills to get involved with their solutions.

It's relatively easy to introduce problems and background information on their causes and cures. Most school programs also lend themselves well to training students in certain minimal monitoring skills. Dealing with attitude change is much more difficult because the nature of attitude formation and change is not well understood. Also, school administrators are reluctant to become involved with any project that could be the least controversial within the school community. Schools tend to be “middle-of-the-roaders” so as not to offend either extreme and, therefore, they shy away from obvious attempts to change student attitudes on social issues.

Action projects, where students become directly involved with an environmental issue, are the most difficult, and yet, probably the most rewarding. They frequently take large amounts of time,

more than casual knowledge, and often, creative scheduling that wreaks havoc with school routine. But involvement in a hands-on project provides students with a perfect reason to acquire the knowledge, attitudes and skills they need.

For teachers who solve all the logistic problems, there remains the problem of choosing the action projects most feasible and worthwhile. Another roadside litter pickup may not be the answer.

### Some Great Ideas . . . And Real Needs!

The Mid-Atlantic Region of the National Audubon Society has developed a compilation of exciting projects for local volunteer groups interested in working with wildlife. “Volunteers for Wildlife,” published by the Wild Resource Conservation Fund, in close cooperation with the Pennsylvania Game Commission, thoroughly covers these projects one by one.

Identified are 11 worthy wildlife projects that need manpower to provide research data about various nongame species. Any group or individual can get involved; specialized knowledge or training is not necessary. Six of the ideas lend themselves well to school projects that will give students hands-on experience with environmental issues.

### Bat Trend Survey

There are strong indications that bat populations are declining in Pennsylvania, yet nobody knows for sure because very little historical information exists on actual bat numbers. To remedy that prob-

lem, a program has been developed that relies on volunteers to census bat populations.

Cooperating volunteers identify a survey site and record the number of bats observed during two one-hour observation periods. All data is compiled and analyzed by Game Commission biologists.

As a classroom activity, the bat trend survey is a workable end-of-year project. Each student could identify a survey site and record their own counts with the teacher submitting results to program organizers.

## The Vertical Nest Box

Unlike the single-unit nest boxes usually provided for cavity nesters, this box is a multi-unit condominium for many families. The box is a tall (up to 10 feet or more) series of wildlife apartments designed to attract species of many kinds. Wrens, starlings and white-footed mice might use different quarters in a wildlife condo.

An exciting aspect of this project is the degree of creativity and experimentation sought from volunteers. The program en-

## GAMEcooking Tips

### Sorrel

Sorrel, or sour grass, has been consumed by man since 3000 B.C. Sorrel tastes slightly sour, as its name implies, reminding us of spinach with lemon. Sorrel is widely used in Russia and in Europe. The Troisgros brothers in Rouen, France, were awarded a third Michelin star for their celebrated Poached Salmon in Sorrel Sauce. The French also enjoy it in their classic soup, "Potage Germeny."

Sorrel grows in great profusion all over our continent. *Rumex acetosella*, often referred to as sheep sorrel, field sorrel, or sour grass, is easy to identify, even for the beginner. It grows about eight to 12 inches high and has pale green leaves shaped like arrowheads. This plant grows from early spring through summer, and some areas even produce a fall crop. Look for sorrel in fields, along roadsides, and in gardens and lawns. The leaves are small, between one and four inches long, and have a soft texture. For further information consult a field guide to edible plants.

To prepare, remove the stems and wash the leaves under cold running water. Cook as you would spinach, using only the water that clings to the leaves. A pound of sorrel will reduce to  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of puree. The puree can be frozen for up to three months.

Add sorrel to soups, and egg and fish recipes for a variation that is re-

freshing. Add one cup of julienned sorrel leaves to cream soups, or try adding sorrel as a garnish to hot soups, letting the leaves "melt" into the soup one or two minutes before serving.

Wild greens lend themselves so well to game dishes. Watercress, wild leeks and dandelions are other good accompaniments to wild game meals. Experiment on your own with sorrel, or try this soup using watercress and sorrel.

### Watercress Soup

- 2 cups water
- 1 teaspoon seafood seasoning (Old Bay)
- $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup wild leeks, diced or to taste
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup bamboo shoots
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup butter
- 2 cups pheasant stock
- 1 cup chopped, cleaned watercress
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 cup julienned sorrel leaves

Simmer first five ingredients 15 minutes. Add stock and heat through. Add watercress, heat to boiling. Drizzle in egg and heat to serving temperature, stirring constantly. Sprinkle with sorrel leaves and serve immediately. Serves 6.

—FROM WILD GAME COOKERY  
BY CAROL VANCE WARY



courages cooperators to try novel designs in various habitats to see which species will use such apartment units and which design components are most critical.

School classes could design, build and monitor one or more vertical boxes in several nearby habitats. Individual students could get deeply involved by experimenting with designs of their own at home.

## Barn Owl Five Trail

Barn owl populations are decreasing in many areas and are even considered endangered or threatened in some states. Loss of farmland habitat and lack of suitable nesting sites are possible reasons.

This project describes two methods of building and mounting five barn owl nest boxes. Boxes are placed in barns and silos according to directions provided in the project manual. They are then monitored to determine use by nesting barn owls. In addition, volunteers are asked to provide descriptive information about the habitat surrounding each box.

## 1988 Find-It Contest

An effort is being made to locate the largest colony of purple martins in the state. Purple martins have declined in recent years and biologists are anxious to locate and study existing large colonies to learn the reasons for their success. In this project, volunteers search throughout their local areas for active purple martin colonies. This information will be submitted to the Game Commission. Awards will be given to the finders of the largest colony and also to the landowner where it's found.

## Purple Martin Survey

This project consists of two surveys—both feasible for classroom projects. In the first survey, participants locate ten purple martin boxes and monitor them each year to see if they are used or not. In the second survey, ten active colonies are monitored in late May or June to determine the number of apartments used by purple martins.

A class of students could locate purple martin colonies and monitor them near the end of the school year. The following



year, a new class could monitor the boxes as a field trip or individual students could be assigned to monitor one or more boxes.

## Windows for Shut-Ins

High school classes could easily complete this thoughtful project. Senior citizen centers and homes for the disabled often lack a well designed feeding area for winter wildlife. This project encourages volunteers to design and construct such stations. They will help wild species and, more important, give shut-ins the joy of watching wildlife.

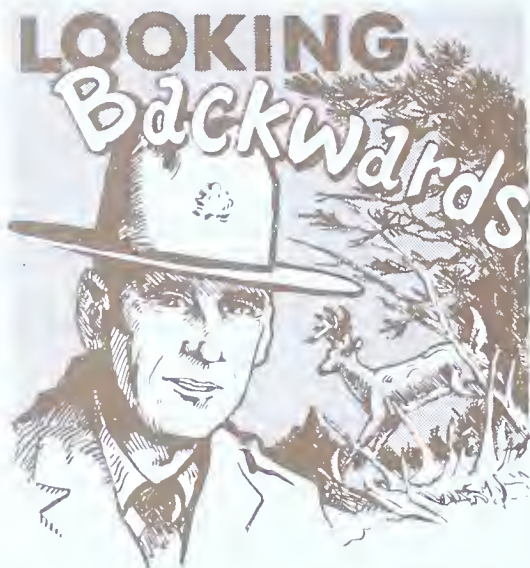
Monitoring the feeders, keeping them in good condition and stocking them with food is as important to this project as is the initial construction. Local businesses are often willing to donate shrubs, building supplies and bird seed.

Sometimes the experience of organizing and maintaining an effort like this has profound influences on the sensitivities of young adults. As they share themselves and their experiences with shut-ins they develop a new perspective of the meaning of life and the pressures each of us faces every day. There's obviously opportunity in this project to learn as much about human nature as about wild nature.

## For More Info

"Volunteers for Wildlife" is coordinated by the Mid-Atlantic Region, National Audubon Society, 1104 Fernwood Avenue, Camp Hill, PA 17011. Request a copy of the project manual and get started.

Make environmental education something more than one more discussion topic. Do something positive!



## By Bill Bower

Wildlife Conservation Officer

Bradford County

**W**HEN AN officer hears there's been a hunting accident in his district, his already hectic schedule is completely upset. It's been my experience that if I can get to talk to the victim and the offender as soon after the accident as possible, I'll get a true picture of what really happened. It's important, therefore, for an officer to get to the accident scene quickly, before valuable evidence is destroyed. A wildlife officer must thoroughly investigate every hunting accident because they usually end up in court, not only criminal court but also civil court.

Through the years I've investigated all types of hunting accidents. Many involved hunters who knew each other and were in the same hunting party. Some were not serious accidents, some were serious and one was a fatal accident. But the two accidents I want to tell you about were not serious. As a matter of fact, neither was even a hunting accident.

The 1971 fall turkey season was underway. At the beginning of the second week I received a memo from the Dallas office, stating that there had been a hunting accident in my district. The victim had been taken to the Towanda Memorial Hospital. Officer Dean Beach had interviewed the victim, and a copy of Dean's report was attached. I was to investigate further.

As the victim was a student, I stopped at his school to talk to him. The story was, he

was hunting turkeys. He was calling when he heard a shot and felt pellets hit him. He yelled, but no one came. He didn't see anyone, so he went home. The following morning his hand was swollen, so he went to the nurse at school. She called his mother, who took him to the hospital.

The boy also told me who he was hunting with that day. After leaving the school I went to talk to his partner. I found him at work. I said, "I'm here about the hunting accident."

"What do you mean, hunting accident?" the man asked. I shot him on purpose!

"Wait a minute!" I said. I got my constitutional card out and read the young man his rights. After all the legal aspects were taken care of I asked, "Now what about the hunting accident?"

He said, "I'm telling you it wasn't an accident. I shot him on purpose."

"Why?" I asked.

"Well, he said something bad about my girl."

"What did he say?" (I won't print his answer.)

I then asked how far away he was when he shot. The young man said, "About 100 yards."

"Do you know it's illegal to shoot someone on purpose?" I asked.

"Yep, sure do. He had it coming."

"Well, I'm sure the State Police will want to talk to you!"

"I'll be here!" he concluded.

Well, I headed back to the school to talk to the victim again. I also called Dallas and had them arrange to have a State Police officer meet me at the school.

This time the young boy admitted he had been shot by his friend.

"Why did he shoot you?" I asked.

"I don't know. We were sitting at the end of a cornfield, waiting for our dog to come back, and he asked me how far a shotgun shoots. I said I didn't know. Then he fired a shot out across the cornfield, loaded up the gun and turned to me and said 'Get running!' When I asked what for he said he was going to shoot me."

"What did you do?" I asked.

"I got running! What would you do if someone told you they were going to shoot you?" he replied. "I was 35 to 40 yards away, trying to duck behind a tree when he shot. My hand was on the tree and it got hit."

"What did you do then?" I asked.

"I picked up my gun, which I had dropped, and shot back."



"Did you hit him?"

"Nope. He had started running and was too far away."

"What did you do then?"

"Well, I yelled. 'You hit me you fool.' and he came back. We wiped the blood off my hand then went home and washed up. That night we camped out and my hand started to swell up. On Monday, when I went to school, it was really hurting, so I went to the school nurse."

The nurse called his mother, his mother took him to the hospital, which in turn called the Game Commission. The boy had made up the story about hunting turkeys so he wouldn't get his friend in trouble. That's where my investigation ended.

The State Police then took over because the incident was no longer a "hunting accident." I really don't know what the outcome of their investigation was, but I did arrest the young boy later, for hunting unaccompanied, and requested license revocation. And in the years that followed I had many contacts with the young man, none were pleasant.

The other accident also involved two young men. Their story was that they had gone woodchuck hunting and split up. When one boy saw a woodchuck, he took a shot at it. His buddy was beyond the woodchuck, out of sight. The shot went past the chuck and hit his buddy. They were scared, so they decided not to say anything to anyone. But a couple of days later, the boy got scared and went to the school nurse. She called the parents. The parents took the boy to the doctor, who removed some pellets.

I went to see the boys. It wasn't long

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## GAME NEWS

For a Friend . . .

until I got that feeling that things weren't right. After talking to the boys and their parents, it wasn't too long before we had the facts.

The boys had started out hunting woodchucks. But like all young boys, they became bored and began target shooting. They found some shells in an outhouse by a local camp. The boy shot twice at the targets, but didn't hit any. Then they noticed the cartridges were not like any 22 shell they had seen. They concluded they were blanks. Well, when one boy got up to go check the target, the other boy loaded the "blank" and shot his buddy in the rear.

Immediately the boys came to the stinging realization the shells weren't "blanks", but birdshot.

The boys were scared and went back to their grandfather's and removed three or four pellets. Several days later, the victim visited the school nurse.

Both of these shootings were caused because young boys were out with firearms when they weren't supposed to be. Laws have been enacted that specify when a youngster can go out with a firearm by himself. They're not to penalize young hunters, they're for their own good. Believe me, gunpowder and horseplay just don't mix!

DR. KENNETH FELIX, left, was presented with a fine art print of Ned Smith's "Big Woods Bobcat" and a Certificate of Appreciation for his 15 years of voluntary services to the agency. Over that time he has rehabilitated many injured raptors and other wildlife. In one instance, Dr. Felix reconstructed both hip sockets on an injured bobcat which has since been found, doing well, over 60 miles from its release site. Pictured with Ken are WCO Shane Hoachlander and IES Bob MacWilliams.



A FRIEND of mine, a tall, craggy, white-haired man, died two summers back, at the time when the wild black raspberries hang full and purple on the stalks and the blueberries are just coming on ripe. Dob Studholme was an inveterate jelly maker. I can see him bent over in a raspberry patch, muttering as the thorns scratched his wrists and jagged his outstretched hands, birds scolding and deerflies circling as he picked just one more quart. I can see Dob down on his knees, big blunt fingers plucking little purple flowers. Dob made a mean violet jelly.

Also wild cherry, sassafras, elderberry. He was more than a little proud of the fine claret color and tangy flavor of his Hopa crab apple-black raspberry mix. Rosehips-barberry. Wild grape. Elderberry-sumac. Quince.

I caught the foraging fever from Dob; I already possessed the requisite weakness for sweet things spread on toast. So far, I have pretty much confined myself to the standards—strawberry, black raspberry, blueberry—but I'm considering trying some of Dob's exotics. Wild grape-Hopa crab. Chokecherry. Mayapple. Mint.

### Many Rewards

Making wild preserves offers many rewards. Gathering the raw materials is an unassailable excuse for spending time out-of-doors, and I know the fruit I pick hasn't been tainted with pesticides. Jellies and jams make unique, simple gifts, unlikely to goad people into reciprocating with objects like macrame toilet-seat covers or plastic cuckoo clocks. Wild preserves are nutritious and they taste great. They have strong powers of evocation: when the rafters grunt with cold and snow swirls past the window, I can send a warm summer breeze wafting through the kitchen by opening a jar of jelly.

Jelly is a mixture of fruit juice and sugar that is clear and firm enough to hold its shape. Jam will also hold its shape, although less resolutely than jelly; jam is whole fruit, crushed or chopped, combined with sugar. The se-



*Chuck Fergus*

cret to making good preserves lies in properly blending four elements: fruit, pectin, acid, and sugar. The fruit gives the distinctive color and flavor. Pectin and acid are found in all fruits, but to varying degrees; combined with sugar, they cause the product to jell. Sugar also serves as a preserving agent and, of course, adds its own sweet flavor.

Some fruits—apples, crab apples, grapes—contain enough pectin to jell on their own. Most others, however, don't, and require adding high-pectin fruits or their juices, or commercial pectin such as Certo (a liquid) and Sure-Jell (a powder). The easiest way to make wild preserves is to use commercial pectin: cooking times are shorter and more predictable, and results are nearly always good.

Here is the basic procedure for making jelly. Crush the fruit and simmer it until the juices start to flow. Spoon the crushed fruit into a jelly bag (more about jelly bags later) and collect the juice that drips out. Measure out the amount called for in the recipe sheet inside the box of pectin. (Don't try for bigger batches, as a kitchen range just can't heat larger quantities fast enough to make perfect jelly.) Put the juice in a pot, add pectin, heat, and stir in sugar. (Be sure to use stainless steel, enamel, or glass cookware: the vitamin C found in many fruits is destroyed by iron and copper, and fruit acids pit aluminum and leach zinc from galvanized steel.)



Boil, stirring like the dickens. Remove from heat, skim off and discard the foam, and ladle the jelly into sterilized jars. Seal the jars, sit back, and contemplate future repasts. It's much the same for jam, except you use the entire mashed fruit.

A nice thing about making preserves is following the wild fruits through the seasons. Around our home, the first to ripen is the strawberry, plump and ruddy by early or mid-June, soon after deer drop their fawns. I know fields where I can't walk without crushing the berries; I kneel in the dewy grass, spread the saw-toothed leaves, and pick fingertip-size berries by the quart. To me, strawberry makes a better jam than a jelly; the small, soft seeds are unobjectionable, and it seems a shame to throw away any of the delicious pulp.

A fortnight after the strawberries I start checking the Juneberry—also called shadbush and serviceberry—which put out its showy white flowers back in April. I must compete for the purple-black fruits; songbirds work the small, shrublike trees, and I've found more than one Juneberry whose tight, gray bark was tattooed with marks showing where a bear had climbed and clung, stripping branch after berry-laden branch. Juneberries make a distinctive, tart jam.

Another early-summer favorite is the black raspberry, found on logged-over land and along forest edges and fence-rows. It is my wife's favorite fruit, and other activities grind to a halt until we have put up a batch or two. Most people prefer it as a jelly rather than a jam, as black raspberries contain many hard seeds; we strain out about half of the seeds, using a food mill, and end up with a spread midway between a jelly and a jam. Picking black raspberries can be dangerous. Once a friend and I got into the usual competition to see who could pick the fastest. I glanced up in time to see him sail his jug through the air, scattering raspberries, then run off swatting and yelling; he had picked his way into a yellow jacket nest.

I like a berry container that frees both

hands, so one can spread aside foliage or canes while the other teases the fruit from the stems. I take a gallon plastic milk jug and slice away the top, leaving the fingerhole, through which I run a short length of rope; the rope goes over my shoulder or around my neck. At the other end of the jelly-making operation lies the jelly bag. An elderly neighbor loaned me the best jelly bag I have ever seen—an old salt sack, whose heavy weave traps the pulp and seeds while letting the juices drip through. Several layers of cheesecloth will also do the trick.

### Wild Cherries

Wild cherries make beautiful jellies, especially the choke cherry, *Prunus virginiana*. The tree is small, often but a bush, and it bears a heavy bounty for birds and foragers alike. As its name implies, the fresh fruit will pucker your mouth, but combined with sugar and pectin it makes a tasty spread.

An old standby, easy to pick but hard to clean, is the elderberry, which ripens in August or early September. Snap off



WILD STRAWBERRY

the berry clusters and carry them home; strip the tiny berries from the stems and float away any unripe berries, leaves, or bits of stem. Lacking pectin — and being somewhat oversweet by themselves — elderberries can be combined with a pectin-rich fruit for a real old-fashioned jelly. Wash a dozen crab apples, put them whole and unpeeled into a kettle, and cover with water. Boil for about 20 minutes; strain off and save the juice, rich in pectin and apple flavor. Combine 3 cups of elderberry juice with 3 cups of crab apple juice, add 6 cups of sugar, and boil until the jelly test indicates the batch is ready for jarring.

### Great Mystery

The jelly test was a procedure of great mystery for my friend Dob. His wife, Suzy, herself an accomplished jelly maker, tried to teach it to him, but Dob failed to develop the knack. I've never tried it myself, preferring to rely on commercial pectin, but here is how it is done: Dip a spoon in the boiling jelly stock, hold it above the heat to cool

slightly, and tip it sideways. If two drops form and then merge and slide off the spoon in a sheet, the jelly is done. If the liquid runs off like water, it needs to boil longer. In his foragers' classic, *Stalking the Wild Asparagus*, Euell Gibbons wrote: "No amount of instruction can take the place of experience in performing this task well. Go ahead and try it; you will be surprised how quickly you master this art."

It was to Gibbons, a fellow central Pennsylvanian, that Dob turned for one of his masterpieces: elderberry-sumac. Smooth sumac, *Rhus glabra*, is a common roadside shrub that bears, at the tips of its several stalks, dense, conic clusters of fuzzy red berries. (The poisonous species of sumac has white berries on loose strings and looks entirely different.) Put six or eight scarlet sumac bobs in a pot, cover them with water, and pound and stir for 10 minutes with a wooden spoon. Strain the juice through several thicknesses of cheesecloth to filter out the fine hairs. Use it half and half with elderberry juice (commercial





pectin must be added) for a translucent red jelly with a mouth-watering tang and without the elderberry's cloying oversweetness.

Our family mainstay is the blueberry. In our 25 acres of woods, there's at least one type of blueberry (or huckleberry; even the experts have difficulty separating the species) ripe and beckoning from the Fourth of July through early September. On hot days we do our picking early; crouched in a patch, steadily engaged, we open our ears to the woods music, the pewees and wheeps and pheobes, the squawks and screams and trills. Newts take tiny, herky-jerky steps beneath the bushes; I have found small frogs—spring peepers—perched in the tops of the shrubs.

Blackberries ripen in August, and we pick many of them and the birds and box turtles eat many more and all of the fresh bear droppings we find are purple and loaded with seeds. Blackberry is another jelly candidate.

Come fall, there are cranberries in a nearby bog. On the forest floor the fruits

of the mayapple become pale yellow, and from them can be made a greenish musky jelly that is something of an acquired taste. On a grouse hunt I may chance upon a domestic pear tree, broken and gnarled but still producing fruit, growing near a slumping house foundation; I fill my game pouch, remembering a recipe for pear-apple jam. Other fruits for autumn preserves include barberries, wild grapes, and rosehips.

Formerly I would put up my preserves in recycled jars—baby food, mayonnaise, and the like. After cooking, I would ladle the jam or jelly into the scalded jars and seal the tops with melted paraffin. Now I use half-pint Mason-type canning jars with two-piece lids (a metal band, and a metal cap with a rubber-like gasket compound around the rim), which are safer and more convenient. After jarring the preserves I process the jars in a boiling water bath for five minutes. The bath, which does not affect color, flavor, quality, or nutritive value, heat-sterilizes the preserves. Subsequent cooling wedges the lids securely to the jars, preventing contamination. I store my jellies and jams for a year or more (metal bands removed, to prevent rusting). Rarely does mold form on jellies preserved this way. Research has shown that the molds people usually scrape off the surface of jellies may be dangerous. The molds produce mycotoxins, known to cause cancer in animals; mycotoxins have been found throughout jars of jelly that had mold growing on the surface.

### Make Good Jellies

To make good jellies and jams, one must first learn to find and identify wild fruit. An excellent book covering habitat, seasonality, and identification is *A Field Guide to Edible Wild Plants* by Lee Peterson (Houghton Mifflin, Boston). I like Gibbons's *Stalking the Wild Asparagus* (David McKay, New York) for its homespun tone and its many recipes and tips. For technical information I consult *How to Can Food the Right Way*, available for \$3 from the Ag Mailroom,



437 Agricultural Administration Bldg., Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802.

Reading about jellies and jams is helpful, but in the end one must rise to the task and get under way. Putting up preserves isn't always a snap; often a little experimenting is needed to get things just right. And sometimes nothing seems to work, not even for the master jelly makers among us.

I remember a time when Dob Studholme had picked a batch of black raspberries, crushed them, and collected the precious juice. He had it in a plastic jug, which somehow managed to get away from him at approximately chest height. He tried to arrest the jug's fall by pinning it against the kitchen counter with his belly. There was a great whoosh as juice erupted through the jug's narrow mouth. Dob was purple from the waist up. The counter was purple, the walls were purple, the ceiling was purple. No jelly was made that day.

(This article originally appeared in *Country Journal*.)

## RECIPES

### BLACK RASPBERRY JAM

Gather 2 to 3 quarts of the fruit, which ripens in late June or early July. Crush berries one layer at a time. Strain half of the pulp through a food mill to remove seeds and then mix with remaining pulp. In a large pot, combine 5 cups prepared berries and one package commercial pectin; stir well. Bring to full boil over high heat, stirring con-

stantly. Boil for one minute, then remove from heat. Skim off foam and pour jam into jars; seal with two piece lids. The jelly is deep purple. (From the author.)

**HOPA CRAB APPLE JELLY** (made from the Japanese flowering crab apple, a common ornamental shrub)

Gather red fruit in August. Cut fruit in halves. Cover with water, bring to boil, and simmer for 20 minutes. Pour off juice; strain through coffee filter for clearer jelly. To 7 cups of juice, add one package commercial pectin. Bring to a boil; add 9 cups sugar. Bring to a full rolling boil, stirring constantly. Boil for one minute, then remove from heat. Skim off foam and pour jelly into containers. Seal with two-piece lids. The jelly is red. (From Dob Studholm.)

### PEAR-APPLE JAM

Wash, peel, and core about 2 pounds fully ripe pears. Crush well and measure 2 cups prepared pears into large saucepan. Wash, peel, and core 1 large apple; finely chop and add 1 cup to pears. Stir in  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon ground cinnamon. Mix  $6\frac{1}{2}$  cups sugar and  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup bottled lemon juice into the fruits and bring to a boil over high heat, stirring constantly. Immediately stir in 6 ounces commercial liquid fruit pectin. Bring to a full rolling boil and boil hard 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat, skim off foam, pour into jars and seal. (From *How to Can Food the Right Way*, Pennsylvania State University Agricultural Extension Service.)

## Bowhunters Festival

A Bowhunters Festival is being sponsored by the Northampton County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, August 5, 6 and 7, at Bear Swamp Northampton County Park, Johnsonville. Movies will be shown Friday night, August 5. The main events will be held from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, August 6 and 7. Features will include a three-loop, 58 3-D target tournament, seminars on archery shooting and hunting techniques, and demonstrations by industry representatives. Entrance fees will be charged attendants and tournament contestants.



Looking for answers . . .

# Down in the Valley

By Keith C. Schuyler

I'VE LONG wondered why Pennsylvania bow hunters don't show a much better success ratio in the archery deer seasons. We know, of course, that reported figures can differ substantially from the actual kills in some counties, even though failing to report a big game kill can now result in a \$25 fine.

But even taking into consideration the inevitable discrepancies among reported, calculated and actual harvests, there appears to be a considerable spread between the potential ability of archers and the results they are obtaining in the field. It is understandable that 5542 archers reported only 32 deer killed in 1951 when the first archery season was held; only antlered deer were legal. The count went up to only 226 for 26,210 licensed archers, less than one percent success, in 1956, the year before the "any deer" provision was added. At that point there were those who screamed that archers would now decimate the deer herd before the gunning season.

They needn't have worried. Although the number of archers more than doubled the following year, to 55,559, they reported but 1358 animals, a kill ratio of 2.44 percent.

The same fears of deer extinction



**MOST OF** today's archers are using compound bows, top grade arrows, wear excellent camouflage clothing, and have ready access to the best information. Something else must be causing a lot of missing.

were forecast in 1973, when then Governor Milton Shapp signed legislation making compound bows legal hunting arms. Although the number of bow hunters jumped from the previous year's 164,055 to 194,141, the kill ratio that year was 1.9 percent.

## Improved Scores

The score has improved by comparison. Four years ago, when the number of bow hunters went to 274,994, success ratio was 2.44. The next year, 1985, it moved up to just over 3.0 percent. In 1986, it went to almost 3.5 percent. Last year, 252,976 bow hunters took 8950 deer, a ratio of 3.54 percent.

That's still not very exciting. Just consider that three times as many deer taken by archers are killed each year on our highways — unintentionally.

True, it is unfair to compare Pennsylvania statistics with those from other

states, such as Michigan, where hunters may take two deer and are allowed to hunt over bait. (I've heard that an effort to halt baiting there brought objections, not from hunters, but from farmers who make a business of selling carrots and sugar beets for the purpose.)

Personal observation and input from other hunters leads me to believe that year after year the same hard core of dedicated archers is accounting for the bulk of the deer being killed in Pennsylvania by the bow and arrow. But, as probably 90 percent of all bow hunters today are carrying compound bows, top grade arrows, wearing excellent camouflage clothing, and have access to all the best information through books and periodicals, there must be something else causing a lot of missing. The deer are there. Efficacy of the compound bow, when properly tuned, cannot be disputed. Any complaints must be based on esthetics or the extra knowledge needed to keep compounds in tune. Longbow and recurve archers have somewhat fewer problems.



When browsing through the excellent 66-page booklet, *TUNING YOUR COMPOUND BOW*, by Larry Wise, Mifflintown, world champion pro archer, I stopped at Chapter 4, "Shooting From the Valley." Although this book (\$8.95 at Target Communications, 7626 W. Donges Bay Rd., Mequon, WI 53092) covers all phases of setting up a compound bow for maximum efficiency, Chapter 4 may hold the key to the basic problem for most compound bow hunters.

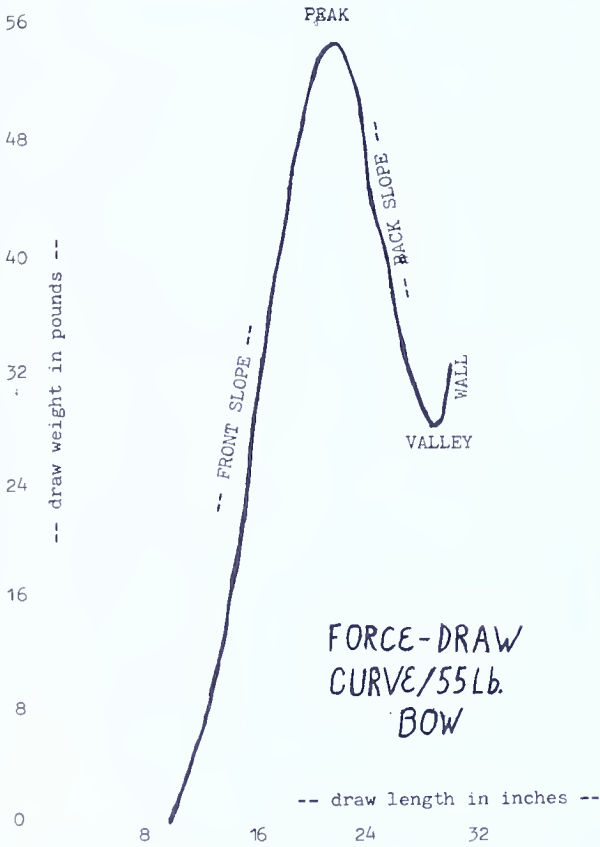
First Be Assumed

It must first be assumed that all the other niceties of bow tuning have been attended to before considering the all important adjustment of "shooting from the valley." The valley is defined as that point after the front slope peak (see diagram) has been reached, where the draw weight reaches its point of least resistance. Beyond this point is what has become known by some as the "wall," where power again increases sharply. In fact, drawing beyond the valley is dangerous and may result in a broken bow.

Consequently, an archer must make an effort to consistently anchor his draw at the point where resistance is least, the valley. Depending upon the bow, resistance at that point may be anywhere from two-thirds to less than half the peak power. There are a number of reasons why this is so important.

If the release is made on the back slope, before the valley is reached, the still decreasing back pressure slaps the arrow out of the bow. The result will be a high and probably erratic arrow. If the

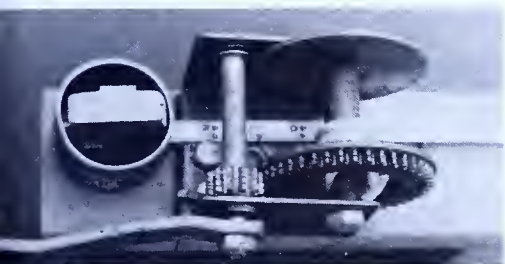
THE VALLEY is that point, after the front slope peak has been reached, where the draw weight reaches its point of least resistance.



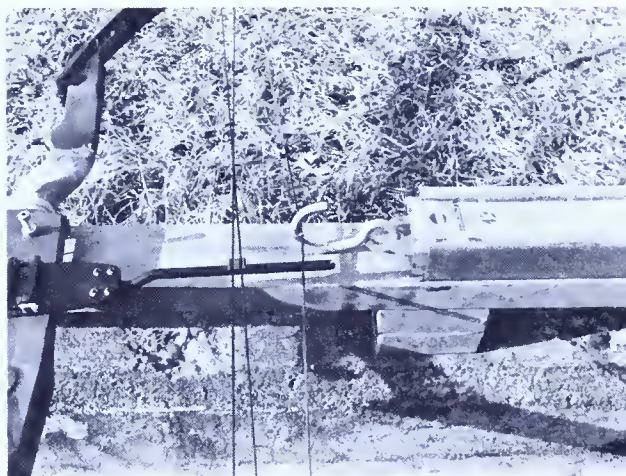




SCHUYLER used the machine above to determine the relationship between draw length and draw weight.



CLOSE-UPS of the measuring tape above, and scale, right, show how the two factors are accurately measured. It's important to fasten the bow at the handle throat, below, where the shooter's hand would normally be.



through the valley. That alone may account for some misses or poor hits at distances which are as easy as apple pie on the target range.

When the arrow is released properly, at the middle of the valley, it is gently propelled out of the bow by the gradual increase in the power stroke of the string. Cam bow shooters have to be more precise because the valley is more narrow than that of a conventional compound.

draw is continued on through the valley to the "wall," the power stroke on release must traverse the valley and retrace its path to the point where the arrow leaves the string. In such cases, according to Wise, the changing pressures may cause the arrow to go high or low, and it may lose ten pounds or more of thrust going

The answer, of course, is to develop a consistent draw which terminates at the middle of the valley. There are a number of assists available for the purpose—draw checks, clickers, lights and kissers buttons. None are effective, however, without consistent practice. In Larry Wise's opinion, failure to keep practicing, even during the hunting season, is



THE SNOWY EGRET is the seventh species in the Game Commission's Working Together for Wildlife program. The program is intended to generate support for nongame animals. This year's snowy egret patch is priced at \$3, delivered. Patches of the bluebird, bobcat, kestrel and elk are still available; those of the osprey and river otter are sold out. Decals (\$1 each) of the first six species are still available, but none of the egret is being made. Order from the Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.

one of the greatest deterrents to deer hunter success.

Because an archer shooting uphill or downhill, as from a tree stand, is inclined to adjust his draw in those unnatural positions, he faces the possibility of shooting from either side of the valley. The slightest bit of creeping or over-drawing of the bow can make a poor shot out of a sure one. That in itself emphasizes the need, frequently stressed here, to practice shooting from every possible angle, both before and during the hunting season.

The best way to determine if your draw is proper is to have your bow

checked. Because a certain amount of friction can distort the figures a bit, it's a good idea to repeat the procedure several times. Weigh your bow's draw weights from fistmele, the static position, up to and slightly through the valley to the wall position to determine your proper draw. You may find that a different length string, cable adjustment or different size eccentric wheel or cam is in order.

Today's expert target archers determine their draw from a point directly above the deepest part of the grip, or handle, or from the center of the hole provided for the spring-loaded arrow cushioner. They consider that true draw, not the traditional measurement from the back of the bow to the throat of the arrow nock. The difference is about  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inches, so keep that in mind when ordering arrows; most manufacturers use the traditional means of determining length.

We are considering here only the most important facet of bow tuning. Your arrow shafts must be straight, heads properly aligned, a rest that will permit adequate fletching to clear properly, nocks that fit the string, and a few other necessities, as well as good shooting form, are needed.

To get an up-to-date force-draw curve for this column, I put my current Jennings Forked Lightning deer frightener on my bow weighing apparatus. I was pleased to discover that after three years it had retained its 55-pound weight at 21 inches of draw (see diagram) before dropping down to a one-inch valley at 28 inches of draw. I use a  $28\frac{1}{2}$ -inch arrow to provide a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch clearance for my broadheads. To be on the safe side, I now have a draw-stop installed on my cables at precisely 28 inches to let me feel when my draw is right.

I don't want to miss on the mountain because I'm not shooting from down in the valley.





**FOR ACCURACY** such as this all four units of the rifle — stock, barrel, action and sights — and the cartridge must function in perfect harmony.

## RIFLE ACCURACY

**By Don Lewis**

**Photos by Helen Lewis**

**D**OESN'T THAT make you sick? That custom outfit will have to improve dramatically, or I'll get my money back."

The owner of the custom 22-250 was talking out the side of his mouth while his eyes were glued to my spotting scope. He kept condemning his new varmint rifle as he studied the 5-shot group I had just fired. I was trying to listen and, at the same time, mentally measure the group through the outfit's 6-18x scope.

"You're not saying anything," he said sarcastically. "Do you feel the same way I do? It's a poor shooting rifle, isn't it?"

"Not at all," I answered. "As near as I can judge, the shots are well under one inch. To me, that's woodchuck accuracy any day of the week."

"Maybe to you, but not to me," he

tossed back angrily. "I have close to five C-notes in this heavy-barrel outfit, and I expect one-hole results. Your group is not much better than the ones I have been getting. That's not what I want, nor is it what I paid for. Every custom-made chuck rifle should be a one-holer. There's no point in having one built if it doesn't shoot any better than a factory job."

### No Comment

I made no comment on the quality of his rifle, but it was far from first-rate. It consisted of an inexpensive heavy barrel screwed into a Mauser action which still retained the original military trigger. The stock was completely handmade, but did not reflect good workmanship. It was not a superb job. In fact, I was surprised it shot as accurately as it did.



When neither of two more 5-shot groups failed to produce a magical one-holer, there was nothing I could say to soothe his feelings. He wasn't impressed that the three groups I had fired were below the inch mark. I insisted he fire the last 5 rounds, but, the way he fed the first round into the chamber, I knew he was too upset to shoot a decent group. After each shot he studied the target and grew more frustrated. He shot an erratic group which only compounded his frustration. When he left he assured me he'd be back with an outfit that would cut a one-hole group. I never saw him again.

I have written about accuracy several times in this column, what it is, and how to properly define it. I intend to touch on those subjects again, because the one-hole-at-100-yards syndrome is still

dominating the thinking not only of many varmint shooters, but also of big game hunters.

Webster's Dictionary defines accuracy as: "degree of conformity of a measure to a standard or a true value." I could go on to say that accuracy is "free from error or exactness." Those are general definitions of accuracy.

In the shooting realm, the standard of measure a vast number of shooters use is a one-hole group at 100 yards. That might be a standard worth shooting for—no pun intended—but it's not an absolute standard that must be met by every rifle. In fact, the one-hole standard is ridiculous to start with and, if it had to be met, nearly all hunting rifles would be disqualified.

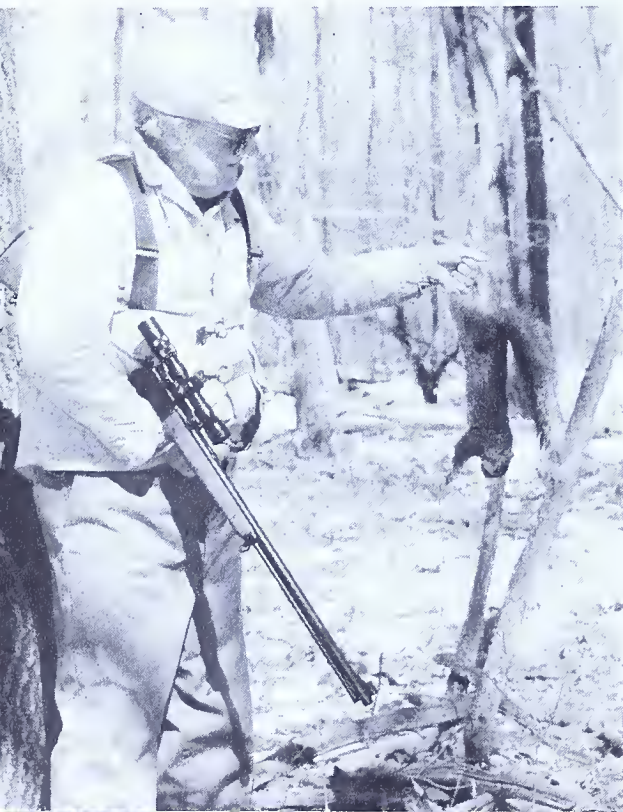
### Depends

The importance of accuracy depends upon what the firearm is used for. The benchrest rifle has to stay under  $\frac{1}{8}$  minute-of-angle for the shooter to be competitive at 100 yards. That means putting five shots in one hole that is less than 0.2, center to center, between the two widest shots. That's benchrest accuracy.

I'm a woodchuck hunter from the Great Depression Era. Back then I shot chucks at 40 yards with 22 rimfire rifles that couldn't keep five shots in two inches at 100 yards. Yet, those rifles were perfectly adequate for the type of hunting I was doing. When I sighted in my Remington 280 Mountain Rifle prior to last deer season, I wasn't dreaming of printing one-hole 3-shot groups. I don't recall what the results were, but although they were far from the one-hole category, they were fine for the deer woods.

Many deer hunters have told me they aren't interested in rifles that won't stay under an inch at 100 yards. I'm sure they mean well, but I'm not sure they

**THE IMPORTANCE of accuracy depends on what the firearm is used for. Most squirrel hunters agree that a rimfire that groups within an inch at 50 yards is adequate.**





realize what they are saying. No one actually needs minute-of-angle accuracy to kill deer in the woods.

Accuracy is not the product of just one or two factors. Let's look at some of the elements of accuracy.

A rifle consists of four basic parts: stock, barrel, action and sighting arrangement. The cartridge also is made up of four units: case, primer, powder and bullet. If we think of accuracy as putting shot after shot into the same ragged hole, then all eight of these elements have to work in perfect harmony each and every time. Finding a rifle that works with such precision is hard enough, but even more difficult is getting cartridges that are identical in every respect.

Each of the four units can vary significantly among cartridges. The wall thickness, for instance, may not be the same on each case. Neck length and thickness affect accuracy, as does the diameter of the flashhole. It's extremely difficult to find five cases exactly alike.

Each of the other three cartridge components is subject to variations, too. Bullet weight may vary slightly. Not every bullet will have a square base that's at a right angle to the bullet's axis, or that is even concentric. Primer ignition temperatures may vary, and powder

burning rates will not necessarily be the same from shot to shot. I could go on, but it should be apparent that to get absolute duplication in cartridges is next to impossible.

I have chronographed literally thousands of rounds, and with seemingly identical loads, it's rare to get readings that vary less than 25 fps. A high reading for a 22-250 load, for example, may be 3890 fps, and the low 3865 fps. That's a 25-fps spread. The other three shots fall in between. I have found that all shells, both factory and reloaded ammo, normally have even wider velocity spreads. Getting the same velocity shot after shot from the same barrel is just not possible. Yet, duplication is a paramount factor in obtaining one-hole accuracy.

### Perfect Harmony

Again, the four units of the rifle must consistently work in perfect harmony with the four units of the cartridge. And, just as variations in cartridge components influence accuracy, so can the various firearm parts. For instance, housed in the action is the bolt, which has its own working parts. The trigger setup is technically a part of the action, and how uniformly it operates also affects accuracy. Stock inletting and barrel bedding are significant factors, and there are

## New Big Game Records Book

Pennsylvania's deer and bear harvests have attracted nationwide attention for many years, so more than two decades ago the Game Commission began measuring whitetail racks and bear skulls and collecting this data into permanent records. From 1965 through 1986, nine official statewide measuring programs were held. Thousands of deer and hundreds of bears were measured, using the internationally recognized Boone and Crockett system so that hunters could see how Pennsylvania trophies compared with those taken anywhere in North America. Results of these individual scoring sessions were reported in GAME NEWS. Now we have produced a 216-page hard cover book, *Pennsylvania Big Game Records, 1965-1986*, integrating the scores of all nine programs into one master list. Also included are the stories of dozens of the successful hunts, along with hundreds of trophy photos and related material. *Pennsylvania Big Game Records* can be ordered now from the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797. Price is \$10 delivered.

**JIM PIEGHTAL** used a heavy barrel, thumb-hole stock, and 4-12x Redfield to help make this 22 Cheetah a fine varmint outfit.



other things such as the crown in the muzzle. It becomes almost mind boggling, and we are touching lightly on only the ballistic side of the cartridge and the mechanical elements of the rifle. To compound the problems, we add a human element—the shooter.

While it's true that the ballistic and mechanical aspects of shooting can be controlled to some extent by our fussing and tinkering, duplicating human elements is almost impossible. Such duplication involves both physical and psychological factors, and it's more or less a learning process. Competitive riflemen, especially benchrest shooters, probably have come closest to mastering the duplication process after years of shooting. Yet, they are plagued with problems, too. They constantly battle the elements—wind, mirage, etc.—and the pressure of competition. It's true they use only top equipment, and it's within reason to believe that every rifle on a benchrest line has the potential to win. But the ultimate winner is usually the shooter who is the most consistent.

An accurate rifle is not necessarily one that shoots one-hole groups. Rifle accuracy must be thought of in terms of different levels of precision. The benchrest fan needs 0.2 inch or less groups to

win, but the woodchuck or prairie dog hunter with a  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch outfit cannot blame his rifle when a shot doesn't connect. Deer hunters need not be overly concerned with a rifle that shoots 2-inch groups. Why would a deer hunter need a rifle that produces woodchuck-shooting accuracy to hit a vital area almost a foot square? Going a step further, why does a woodchuck hunter need benchrest accuracy? If it's a life-long goal, continue the search. Knowledge, time and money will eventually produce the ultimate rifle. Having that type of accuracy is desirable, but it isn't necessary. Success in the field is not totally dependent upon how accurate the rifle is. A wiser approach is simply getting the best from your rifle.

That brings up a crucial factor: not all rifles are accurate. Target rifles have thick stocks and heavy barrels. Hunting rifles are much lighter. There are thin barreled rifles on the market now that barely go over the 6-pound mark. Mounting a lightweight scope adds less than another pound. No matter how precise the reloaded ammo is, consistent one-inch accuracy with these is beyond our wildest dreams. I'm of the opinion that when metal is shaved off the barrel, accuracy suffers. A thin bar-



rel is rarely as accurate as a heavy one. Thin barrels heat up quickly, and flex and twist more than a heavy one. They're not conducive to top accuracy. That's not all bad, though. The thin barrel will probably meet any reasonable requirement for big game shooting and is a lot handier in the woods.

It must be stated, and I'm not demeaning anybody, that very few people can shoot a one-hole group, even with a top benchrest rifle. Through the years I operated a sight-in shop, I often was told that anyone can shoot from a rest. Many went on to say that they believed in shooting from the offhand position; rests are for the tottering elderly, they thought. Several times I succeeded in getting "offhand purists" to fire groups with their own rifles from my bench. They learned in a hurry that it isn't as easy as it looks. The purpose of the benchrest is not to prove how proficient the shooter is, but to demonstrate the accuracy potential of the rifle and its ammo.

The man in the beginning of this article was unjustly condemning his custom 22-250. His was not a competitive outfit. It wasn't constructed to nearly the exact tolerances of a bench rifle. But it did meet the requirements for a fine varmint rifle. I measured the three 5-shot groups I had fired; the largest was  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch, the smallest tickled the  $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch mark. What more could any chuck hunter want? It's possible that smoothing out the green barrel may have shrunk group sizes. But even if



they never improved, the man had a first class varmint rig. He probably was never satisfied with that 22-250, though, simply because it didn't live up to his expectations.

Not knowing how to shoot a group was another problem the man had. Without realizing it, he was making sight corrections after each shot. That's not the way to shoot a group. Don't aim until your heart starts pounding or you can't hold your breath any longer. Fire the string quickly when conditions seem right. Use the same sight picture and trigger squeeze for each shot. Be repetitious from shot to shot. Get it over with, and then check your results.

Good range techniques must be learned over a long period of time. Don't expect miracles right from the start. You may never shoot a 5-shot one-holer but, in time, you will see a definite improvement. Also, you'll better understand your rifle, and you will certainly have more confidence in your shooting. That's the sum and total of rifle accuracy.

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## *Books in Brief...*

(Order from publisher, not from Game Commission)

**Deer & Deer Hunting Book 2**, by Robert Wegner, Stackpole Books, Cameron & Kelker Sts., Harrisburg, PA 17105, 400 pp., \$29.95. As editor of *Deer & Deer Hunting* magazine, the author is continually receiving the latest scientific information on the animal and the sport. Much of that he's combined here, into a book sure to complement any sportsman's library. This volume begins with famous deer hunters of the past, from naturalist-hunter Judge John Caton to the "Painter of the Whitetail," Ned Smith. Following chapters cover buck movements and hunting pressure, crippling losses, the effects of poaching, and other subjects not normally addressed in deer hunting books.

# *In the wind*

bob mitchell



Amid reports from Louisiana that small groups are poaching hundreds of ducks a day, and estimates that losses to poaching may equal legal waterfowl harvests, the Izaak Walton League is soliciting contributions to buy the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service a \$650,000 helicopter designed for law enforcement purposes. Law enforcement officers feel a helicopter is essential for catching poachers, especially those who bait waterfowl.

**The white-tailed deer was recently declared Ohio's state animal. White-tails were nearly nonexistent in the Buckeye State at the turn of the century, but since then the herd has grown to 225,000. Last year approximately 300,000 hunters took 75,000 deer in the state, and spent an average of \$450 each in the process.**

Trappers added \$8.1 million to Wisconsin's economy last year. Muskrats accounted for more of that total than any other furbearer; 662,000 were sold, at an average of \$3.39 per pelt. Raccoons were second; 206,000 were harvested and sold for an average of \$18.06. Muskrat sales were up 67 percent over the previous year's sales, and overall fur sales were up 44 percent in the state, largely because of high unemployment and favorable weather.

**In 1987 nearly 4000 volunteers worked a total of 105,715 hours on the Appalachian Trail, breaking all previous records for such effort.**

Two years ago, as part of their Wetlands America program, Ducks Unlimited began working on a barren 2270-acre tract in northwestern North Dakota. Among other things, they built 25 islands, each  $\frac{3}{4}$ -acre. As a result, the area now supports 33 waterfowl nests per acre, and the nesting birds enjoy a 90 percent success rate, nine times that of comparable upland sites.

**In Minnesota wildlife related activities—hunting, photography, and bird watching, for example—account for about \$400 million in expenditures (about \$800 million is spent annually on fishing). Furthermore, more than 17 percent of the state's citizens are hunters, compared to the national average of 9.5 percent.**

An ambitious program to control soil erosion and improve water quality has been implemented in Canada. As reported by the Wildlife Management Institute, "National Agriculture Strategy" should also enhance Canada's fish and wildlife resources. Primary emphasis will be on converting marginal lands from agricultural production to long-term vegetative cover. Over \$75 million is being made available for demonstration projects, research, and technical and financial assistance to farmers for implementing conservation practices.

In February, according to the National Audubon Society's Citizens Acid Rain Monitoring Network, 32 states—from Utah to Georgia—received precipitation with a pH below 5.0, which is acidic enough to corrode coatings on metal structures. (Unpolluted rain has a pH of 5.6.) With rainfall measuring 4.3 on the pH scale, Pennsylvania is receiving the highest levels of this pollution.

A record \$265 million in federal aid will be apportioned to state fish and wildlife agencies this year. The monies come from excise taxes on hunting and fishing equipment and motorboat fuel, under the Pittman-Robertson, Dingell-Johnson, and Wallop-Breaux acts. They're administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Of the \$109.9 million in wildlife restoration funds, the Pennsylvania Game Commission will receive \$4,452,296, more than any other state except Texas and Alaska.





*Snowy Egret*, by John Pritko, is the sixth limited edition fine art print available through the Pennsylvania Game Commission's Working Together for Wildlife program. As with the previous editions, *Snowy Egret* is limited to 600 signed and numbered prints. Image size is approximately 15 × 22½ inches, printed on acid-free 100 percent rag paper. Price is \$125; framed prints are an additional \$97.50. Requests for specific numbers will be satisfied on a first-come, first-served basis. Limited numbers of *Country Lane Kestrel* and *Autumn Challenge*, 1986 and 1987 prints, are still available. Orders should be sent to the Pennsylvania Game Commission, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Dept. AR, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.



## Outdoor Recreation Maps

To help outdoorsmen discover more of what Pennsylvania has to offer, the Game Commission has produced six "Outdoor Recreation Maps." Each multi-color 24 x 36-inch map covers one of the Commission's field regions. Highlighted are Game Lands, State Forests and Parks, and private lands enrolled in the Commission's public access programs. Also depicted are municipalities, roads, waterways, and – giving the map a three-dimensional appearance – 100-foot contour lines. Maps are printed on Tyvek, a tear-resistant, water-repellent material which will withstand years of hard use. Each regional map costs \$4 delivered, and can be ordered from the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797. If you are not sure of which maps you want, write for a PGC map order form.



# PENNSYLVANIA GAME NEWS

AUGUST 1988

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Tom B.



*The Wingless Crow*, by Chuck Fergus, is a collection of thirty-three Thornapples columns which have appeared in GAME NEWS. The nearly 200 pages of entertaining reading will appeal to Fergus fans as they reread these selected essays as well as to those who've yet to discover the joys of Thornapples. This top quality hardcover books costs \$10, delivered, and can be ordered from the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept AR, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.



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PENNSYLVANIA GAME NEWS (ISSN 0031-451X) is published monthly for \$6.00 per year, \$16.50 for three years, or membership in Pennsylvania's Cooperative Farm-Game Project or Safety Zone Project; to Canada and all other foreign countries, \$7.00 U.S. currency, per year. Published by the Pennsylvania Game Commission, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, Pa. 17110-9797. Phone (717) 787-4250. Second-class postage paid at Harrisburg, Pa. **CHANGE OF ADDRESS: POSTMASTER:** Send both old and new addresses to Pennsylvania Game Commission. Allow six weeks for processing. Material accepted is subject to our requirements for editing and revising. Author payment covers all rights and title to accepted material, including manuscripts, photographs, drawings and illustrations. No information contained in this magazine may be used for advertising or commercial purposes. Copyright © 1988 by the Pennsylvania Game Commission. All rights reserved.

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## Hey There, Georgie Girl

IT'S NEVER FUNNY when one person shoots another, either by accident or deliberately, as a criminal act or in self-defense. And yet there is something comic about a recent shooting in our nation's capital—or at least about the fallout from that shooting. It seems that about 2 a.m. on June 14, a man heard sounds at his bedroom window and looked out to see that several young persons had climbed the fence to use his swimming pool, possibly during a drug get-together. He called the police. Before they arrived, one of the young men came toward him, apparently in a threatening manner, and the homeowner plinked him in the wrist with a handgun that had belonged to his son, a former FBI agent.

There's nothing unusual about the situation so far. Such things happen constantly when a person has the means and courage to protect himself. What makes this case different is that the shooter was a man named Carl Rowan, a passionately anti-gun columnist who has gone so far as to argue that anybody with an unregistered gun in his home should go to jail. As it turns out, for "various complicated reasons" the gun with which Mr. Rowan defended himself was unregistered. Well, okay. We know about such reasons and now we know about Mr. Rowan. He learned, as so many innocent persons have learned, that when push comes to shove there's simply no substitute for a gun. Nothing comic there, just a fact.

The funny part came when Mr. Rowan's comrades in arms (if I may be permitted such a term here) found themselves obligated to report the incident while at the same time trying to defend his actions after years of claiming no law abiding person has a valid reason for wanting a handgun. I mean, there was John Chancellor, NBC's urbane commentator, grimly smiling while he tippytoed his way through this minefield on national TV, obviously wishing he was on vacation in Tibet instead. Even more interesting was the nationally syndicated column of Georgie Ann Geyer, who admits to being "as ferociously against the American gun culture as is Carl." She writes that there were many confusing issues in the incident (it seemed perfectly simple to me), but boils it down to the "hoary old Geyer truth that extraordinary times bring forth extraordinary measures." She then tells how Mr. Rowan retorted to critics that if society could not protect him and his from drugs and attacks, he would do so himself . . . that he would rather see the newspaper reports of the shooting than of his death. I hope she and Mr. Rowan will excuse me if I say that reasoning has a faintly familiar ring. It just sounds odd coming from an anti-gun writer.

Ms. Geyer goes on to ask, "Should Carl have hovered in bed and let the louts come into his house and do whatever?" That is a good question, one we gun people have asked for decades. She then goes on to say, ". . . once a society suffers as we have from crime and violence and drugs, extraordinary means have to prevail. The secret is not to let societies get to this point . . ." We couldn't agree more. But the fact is, society *has* permitted us to reach that point. Then after pointing out that this nation currently is essentially unable to deal with our crime, Ms. Geyer sums up: "That's where Carl stepped in . . . That is where any of us who love life and hate evil would have stepped in." A rational conclusion, Ms. Geyer. The only funny (strange) thing about it is its source. Maybe, as the song says, "there's another Georgie deep inside." That's good to know. It will show up in other anti-gun people too, if they ever have to spend a night in the real world. —*Bob Bell*





1979 was a memorable year for the McMullens. That year Pat, Jerry, Ed and Don, the author's brothers, each dropped a buck on the morning of opening day.

# More Than Just Hunting

By Joseph M. McMullen

I GREW UP in the rolling forested hills of central Pennsylvania, in a part of Cambria County where my parents grew up, as did their parents, and theirs. Where the setting is rural. Where towns are small and families big. Where everybody knows everybody else. Where the eggs are still brown, and they still call the last meal of the day supper. Where Vale Wood Dairy still delivers milk, even to those who live off the beaten path.

Everyone there has a little bit of farming in his blood. Residents have close ties to the ground, they are aware of the origin of their resources. Aldo Leopold described it better than anyone when he stated, many years ago:

*There are two spiritual dangers in not owning a farm. One is the danger of supposing that breakfast comes from the grocer, and the other that heat comes from the furnace. To avoid the first danger one should plant a garden, preferably where there is no grocer to*

*confuse the issue. To avoid the second, he should lay a split of good oak on the andirons, preferably where there is no furnace, and let it warm his shins while a February blizzard tosses the trees outside. If one has cut, split, hauled and piled his own good oak, and let his mind work the while, he will remember much about where the heat comes from, and with a wealth of detail denied to those who spend the weekend in town astride a radiator.*

Hunting is a common pastime in this area. Nearly everybody hunts. We grew up with hunting. Most of us started chasing chipmunks with sticks and, when we came of age, graduated to shooting groundhogs (nobody calls them woodchucks). I know when I'm back in real hunting territory when people I talk to mention how many groundhogs they've killed. They say with pride something like, "I got 12 so far this year." Red squirrels (my dad still calls them chickorees) used to be considered ver-

min in this area, and many of us young lads used the quick targets to sharpen our shooting skills.

We eventually moved up to gray squirrels and rabbits, but, of course, we had had plenty of experience kicking brush piles for our fathers and grandfathers.

Families grow up hunting together, as do friends. I've spent hundreds, maybe thousands of hours hunting with my five brothers, neighbors, and friends. Memories of good and bad times are developed over the years. Times we were soaked, nearly frozen, or bone tired, as well as times we were successful. Times like, "Hey dad, do you remember when you, me and Ardell Ball tracked that deer in deep snow from down by Johnny Kolak's garage to the bottom of Beldin Hollow, gave up, and had to walk all the way back?"



Family memories mean the most. I can still see my Grandpap Conrad with a twinkle in his eye, a smile on his face and an old Ithaca resting across the crook of his arm. And I still laugh about a time I was with my father and some of my older brothers before I was old enough to hunt. We were walking across

an open grassy field when a rabbit jumped out right across the open, just as Dad was biting into a sandwich. He dropped the sandwich and emptied his double. The cottontail bounced away unscathed as the air was filled with curses and smoke. It sure was funny seeing him bent over trying to salvage what was left of his lunch.

It's not just the memories of the times we share, but memories of the places as well, places in the woods that everyone could associate with. If I said I jumped two deer out of Gerald's Hollow by the old sawmill and they ran up past the bee tree, everybody would know exactly where I meant. Even though the old sawmill is nothing but a little patch of briars and the bee tree rotted away years ago, people still remember these places. They might recollect the time we got honey out of the beech, or they might recall a fox they saw there once, or a nice buck they got out of that hollow.

**WE WERE walking across an open grassy field when a rabbit jumped out just as Dad was biting into a sandwich. He dropped his sandwich and emptied his double; the cottontail bounded away unscathed.**

These markers of common knowledge include trees, old buildings, ridges and hollows. Phrases like: down at the cabin, on ash knob, around Don's stand, in Bone Hollow, on Nagle Hill, back by the dam, and countless others all mean something to me, my family and my friends. Each place conjures up different thoughts for each of us, but the camaraderie expressed by sharing these places is something to behold.

I've lived in New York for several years, but I used to get a nonresident license and hunt around home during Thanksgiving and the first few days of deer season. The number of people I would meet in the woods on the opening days of deer seasons amazed me. Guys I hadn't seen for years, out hunting with sons of their own; people I don't know or remember but who know me; people who know my family. They might



say something like, "You're a McMullen aren't you? Well I know you're brother, Ed." Or an older gentleman might say, "Aren't you one of Albert's boys?"

Sometime during every opening day I would run into one of the Fogles, usually Jerry or Tom. Like my brothers and me, the Fogles take their hunting seriously. Jerry's my age and we used to hunt together all the time. The Fogles are always on the move. A person has to be in good shape to keep up with them. Nobody hunts harder or covers more territory than they do. I have lots of good memories hunting with them. Once, when I was a teenager, Jerry and I spent an entire day hunting small game. We got back to my parents' house about a half-hour before dark. I was bone tired, but I told Jerry I'd get my Dad's car and drive him the two miles down the old road to his home. "No thanks," he said, "I'll walk down, I might see something on the way."

Not long ago one of my cousins said he wanted to come down and bow hunt with the Fogles. I asked if he was out of shape and in need of some exercise. "Not really," he said, "they just make it exciting."

I don't get a Pennsylvania license anymore, but I still like to return home at Thanksgiving. It's such a nice time to be there. Small game season is still in and people have time off from work to do a little hunting. Deer season is around the corner and there are rifles to be sighted in. Stories and tales about past seasons abound.

My mother's cooking might have something to do with my enjoyment of the holiday season. Old fashioned breakfasts include eggs, potatoes, and fried ham topped with my Uncle Norb's homemade horseradish. If that's not enough there's toasted homemade bread coated with real butter, and my mother's black raspberry jelly made from berries my dad picked. Then there's Thanksgiving day itself. A couple of big turkeys to be shared by my eight brothers and sisters and their families, about 40 altogether. My mother's old fashioned German egg noodles are a

## PA PENNSYLVANIA BIG GAME RECORDS

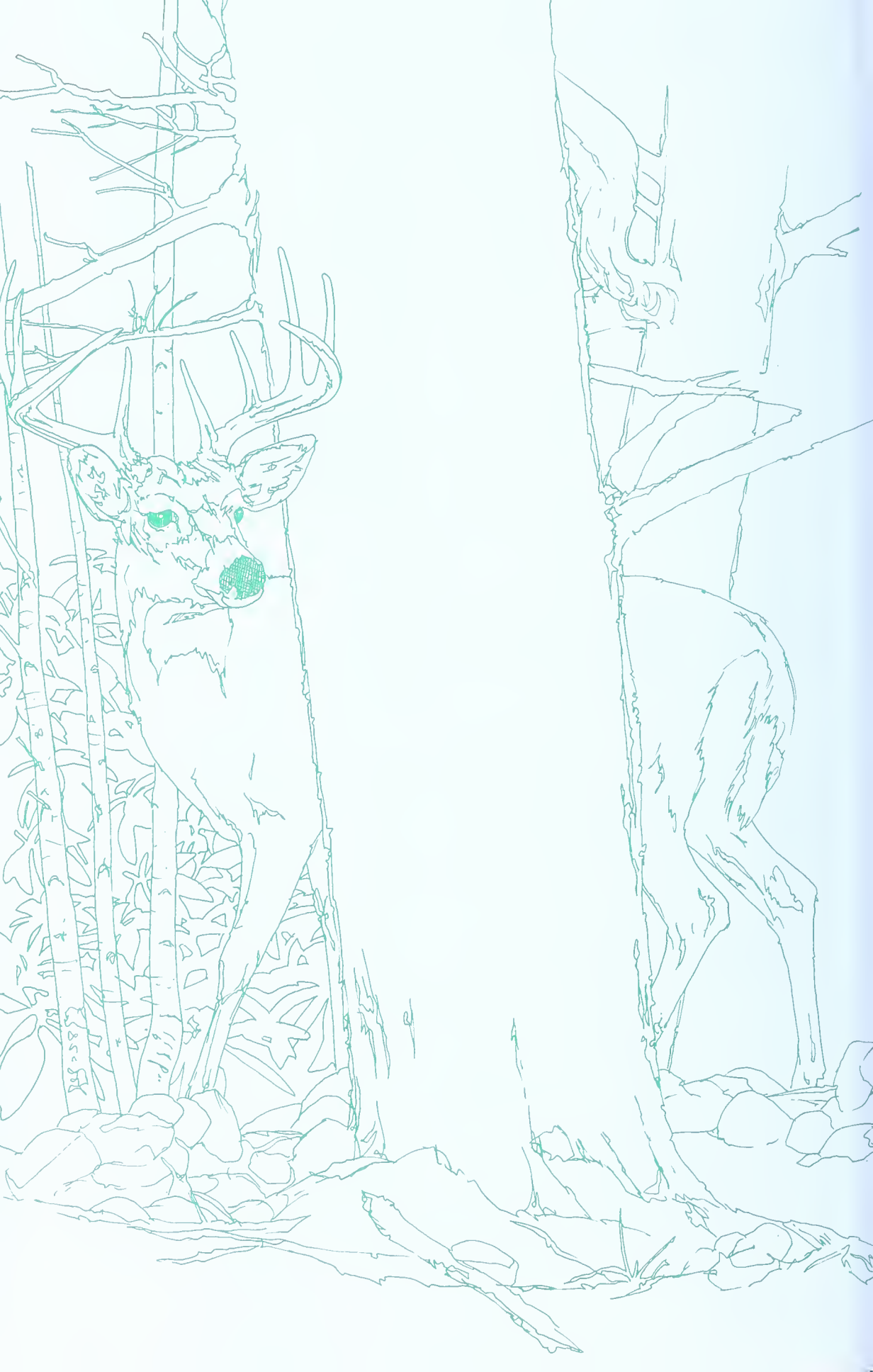
1965-1986



***Pennsylvania Big Game Records, 1965-1986*** is a compilation of the state's official deer and bear records. Also included in the 216-page hardcover book are dozens of stories surrounding the trophy hunts, along with hundreds of trophy photos and related big game information. Order from the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797. Price is \$10 delivered.

family favorite. Last year my mother made eight different kinds of pies. Some of them with that crumbly, sugary Pennsylvania Dutch covering.

There's always time for some small game hunting. I like going along, not to hunt, just to be with my father, brothers, and now some of my nephews. I love to watch them react to a running rabbit, or listen to them reconstruct the events that led to a successful shot. I smile when I hear my Dad tell his grandsons the same lessons about hunting that he told me. It's more than just hunting, it's family togetherness and the sharing of places and memories of hundreds of events developed over the years. For me, I'm back where I started, out there kicking brush piles for my father and brothers. I'm drinking in the sights and smells of the places we hunted, and savoring the memories they instilled about the people I cherish most.





# Three for Four

By Leland R. Moran

**T**HE OLD MONARCH never hesitated. Joe never had a chance to raise his rifle. The high polished rack disappeared in the trees on the other side of the road. Joe gazed at the rump and tail, 285 paces away, through his binoculars. The wise old buck had stopped to survey the patch of woods for danger before entering. Joe, being a true sportsman, never considered attempting a shot; the old monarch deserved a much better fate.

Joe cursed his luck, but kept his 300 H & H up and ready. Although unlikely, he knew the old boy might skirt the forest edge and reappear in the road, closer to his stand. Or, that keen nose might detect trouble and send the animal back the way he had come. But after ten minutes, Joe had to reluctantly conclude the old monarch was gone.

That was the drawback to the logging road stand. It was an excellent spot, and several deer had been taken there, but a hunter had to be quick, always ready, and able to shoot. If doe led the way, as they often did, there was a chance to get set for the lagging buck. When a lone buck stepped out in the road, he would often look left, then right, then left again, like a young schoolboy who had just learned to cross the street by himself. If the gun was on and the hunter could shoot, the deer could be had. But on those occasions when a buck strolled quickly across, as the old monarch just had, there was little a hunter could do but watch.

The gods smiled on Joe ten minutes later, when a consolation buck stepped out in the road and stopped, right where the big boy had previously crossed. The 300 roared and the fat young four-pointer took one leap and collapsed in a heap. Buck season had just begun but, for all intent and purposes, it was over for Joe.

Joe's oldest son, Joey, my Dad, and I all toughed out the remainder of that cold, windy, dreary opening day. We each stayed on our favorite respective stands while the drivers did their jobs stirring around in the surrounding swamps. Deer were moving all around, but the rest of us saw no antlers that day.

## Tuesday and Wednesday

Tuesday morning was windy, but not as bad as Monday. I decided to spend the day at my "pine grove" stand. I had names for my various deer stands and the pine grove was one of my favorites. It was a flat area with dense laurel and pines, terrain and cover ideal for bedding whitetails. A curtain of thick laurel ran behind me and to my left, offering no visibility. But out in front of me and to my right was a small stand of mature open pine woods surrounded on all sides by coarse laurel. Deer often skirted the edge of the pine grove as they crossed to and from the heavy cover.

Drivers continued to push the cover and deer were crossing in all directions, but I couldn't put antlers on any. At 4:30, with darkness coming early on the overcast day, I decided to pack it in. My wife had a night class that evening and I was the babysitter, so I couldn't be late. As usual, though, I took one last good look around in all directions to be sure nothing was coming. I had heard of too many guys who had messed up by standing or climbing down from a tree without looking first, only to see oncoming whitetails go crashing back the way they had come. That's one mistake I never intended to make. Deer hunting was tough enough without giving the quarry any unnecessary advantage.

Reassured, I stood up, put my thermos in my coat, and was hooking two hot seats on my belt. Crunch—

crunch—crunch. It was coming from the thick laurel to my left. A large deer stepped into the open pines and stopped to feed, 30 yards away, behind a wide hemlock. Its rump protruded from the left side of the big pine and its neck stretched to the ground on the right. I was looking at it through the interlacing branches of two small pines to my immediate left. I had considered breaking those branches away that morning, but had decided against it. They provided good cover against any deer sneaking out of the dense brush behind and to my left. Sure enough, the branches concealed me, but now my visibility and my shooting lane were obstructed.

### Dandy Buck

Suddenly, the head jerked up, and a dandy buck with six or eight points were eyeballing me through the pines. He glared at me for about a minute, put his head back down to feed, and then quickly snapped it back up to see if I had moved. He looked nervous and a slight breeze was wisping occasionally in his direction. The drivers had been pushing hard the past two days, making the deer particularly edgy. I didn't think he'd stick around long and two quick jumps would put him safely back in the heavy laurel. I didn't know what to do. His tail was jutting out from one side of the huge pine; his head, partially obscured by the small twigs of nearby closer trees, jutted out from the other. Two steps would give me the same view of his shoulder that I now had of his head. Ten steps would put him out in the open.

Making one of those tough split second decisions all deer hunters face from time to time, I decided he would probably take two steps, but maybe not ten. I

waited. After two or three minutes, he finally took, with his eyeballs riveted on mine, those long awaited two steps. I centered the crosshairs squarely on his shoulder and sent off a 150-grainer from my Remington 30-06. He leaped 15 feet straight up, as if branded with a hot iron, came down running, and disappeared in the laurel before I could get off another round. I was amazed he hadn't crumpled on the spot, as I felt certain my hold and shot were good. I still thought he was hit, though, and I was reassured trail leading into the laurel.

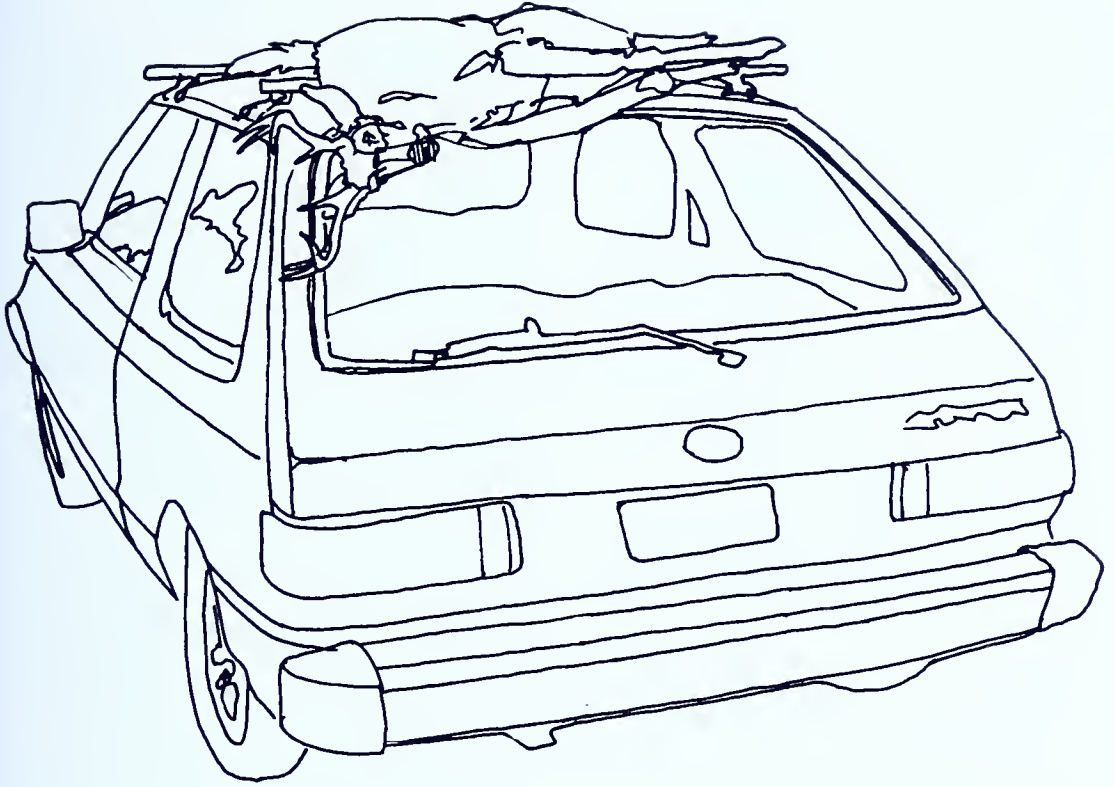
It was really dark, though, and I soon lost the trail in the fading light and thickening laurel. I was sure he was dead or dying in there somewhere, but he would have to keep until morning. I had to get home. No one else was hunting this specific area, so I wasn't concerned about somebody taking him, and it was very cold, thus he wouldn't spoil. I decided to return to tag him first thing in the morning.

Dad and I were back at the scene at dawn on Wednesday. Although I'd had troubled dreams of coyotes and foxes having a venison feast, and of lost hunters with flashlights blundering upon my buck, I was quite confident we'd find him. I didn't carry my '06, thinking it would hinder the drag out, but Dad wielded his 35 Remington, just in case.

We picked up the blood trail right away. Although it wasn't too heavy, it was steady, with nickel-size drops every three to four feet apart. After 75 yards a large blood smear appeared in the leaves where the wounded deer had laid down. We were certain he wouldn't be much further ahead.

I've never been so wrong in my life. The trail petered out. We persevered all morning, crawling on our hands and knees through pine needles, sleuthing for soaked in, pin-size specks of blood. Several times we considered giving up, only to be rejuvenated by another blood smear where the buck had laid and rested. He led us uphill, downhill, through laurel, pines and hardwoods, across creeks, and over stone walls. Five





At dusk, with Dad's buck tied on the roof of my Subaru, we were driving by the four fields bordering our hunting area. In the first field I spied a gut pile. Joey, I figured, must have scored a day or two earlier.

hours and about six miles later, the blood trail was still ice cold and fading. He had traveled all night. I had to face reality. He wasn't hit that hard and had gotten away. I had killed several bucks and had missed a few, but he's the only one I ever wounded but lost. I hope he healed completely. I would rather have missed altogether.

#### Saturday (and Friday)

Dad and I returned to our jobs on Thursday and Friday, but dawn on Saturday found us in the deer woods once again. The weather had improved dramatically as it had cleared and calmed, and a light dusting of snow blanketed the forest. I was at my "funnel stand" at the top of the side hill, while Dad stood sentry at his usual post, a quarter-mile below.

Sitting there I began wondering why the deer weren't moving on this picturesque morning, but when Dad's 35 bellowed twice, my thoughts returned to more pressing matters. I got ready and seconds later, three or four indistin-

guishable deer silhouettes scurried across the side hill 100 yards below, then disappeared. Moments later, Dad called for help and we soon stood admiring his large heavy buck.

Four doe had crept out of the swamp to his left, obviously put out, and stopped to survey the side hill behind his stand. A minute later, as he was watching the doe, motion caught the corner of his eye. The 2½-year-old buck was hanging back, letting his harem be the guinea pigs.

After the first shot the buck raced up the steep hill as if untouched. Dad, thinking he missed, fired again — unnecessarily. The buck lay dead 100 yards above. The steep climb, coupled with a 200-grain slug through the boilerworks, took the starch right out of him.

The remainder of my day passed uneventfully. At dusk, with Dad's buck tied on the roof of my Subaru, we were driving by the four fields bordering our hunting area. In the first field I spied a gut pile by the forest edge. Joey, I figured, must have scored a day or two



earlier, while Dad and I worked. He had.

Friday morning Joey and his cousin Donny (who hunts only occasionally) were walking back through the four fields on their way to the logging road stand. They jumped a herd of deer in the last field, and a mid-size buck, surrounded on all sides by protecting doe, made his escape up the hill and over the top. They took the track in the snow and began the steep climb. On top, they decided to split up. Donny stayed on the track. Joey had a premonition that he should backtrack and skirt the edge, paralleling the four fields below.

Wise decision! As Joey stood by a ledge overlooking the first field below, he spied a huge buck trying to sneak away undetected across the field. In his haste and excitement he missed with the first shot, but the second one found its mark. Joey rejoiced when he made his way down and saw the animal. The old monarch had met his maker. The trophy sported eight high white tines with a near 20-inch spread. It's the nicest buck to come off Joe's property in several years.

### The Last Three Days

It was down to just me. The other three guys had filled their tags, leaving me to go it alone the last three days of the season. That meant my hunting tactics would have to change dramatically. Time, I thought, to put on the size 13 rubber arctics over my hunting boots and do some slinking through the swamp. I had killed bucks early in the season the past few years and hadn't had

this opportunity in a while. I relished the challenge of trying to sneak up on a big buck in his daytime haunt.

Just as I got inside the edge of the swamp I became dismayed because the wind was blowing straight ahead in the direction I planned to hunt. I decided to get in a little farther, then change direction so I would be quartering the wind.

Too late! A monstrous whitetail bounced from its bed and disappeared in a flash. It had scented me. I got to its bedding area and eight more deer bolted out ahead. This was going to be fun, it seemed, once I altered my course and corrected the wind problem.

I crept like Daniel Boone in the dank dark swamp for the remainder of the day. Deer tracks and sign were everywhere. The only distraction to the peace and solitude were chain saws buzzing in the distance. Although I knew it wouldn't bother the deer, it bothered me, and I wished there could be a moratorium on commercial tree cutting during deer season. I pushed the thought out of my mind, though, and took great pleasure being a guest in the whitetails' home that day. I was convinced that my still hunting skills were sharp and that it was the luck of the draw, not my fault, that I didn't see another deer all day.

Friday was the day of the white-out. It snowed so hard that I became an airborne snowman in minutes, perched in the pine tree I had climbed in an attempt to improve visibility. I saw three small doe at 10 o'clock, but the rest of the morning was futile. I had to walk after lunch; I was freezing. I was amazed that the chain saws were still ripping in this arctic-like weather. I sneaked along the edge of the top, thinking I'd be able to see fairly well into the open hardwoods sloping downhill below. The snow was still falling furiously, and I stood for a moment to take in the beauty of this winter wonderland.

A brown spot 100 yards below caught my eye. Was it a deer? Couldn't possibly be. No deer in its right mind would lay out in the open in weather like this. I raised my rifle to get a better look, only to find my scope lenses were caked with



THE OLD monarch had met his maker. The trophy sported eight high white tines with a near 20-inch spread. It's the nicest trophy to come off Joe's property in several years.

snow. I dug out a paper towel and spent nearly a minute trying to clean them. Suddenly, the brown spot jumped up, bolted downhill and crossed the second field. As the deer cut left into the big pines on the far side, I caught a flash of white antler. Curses, foiled again!

I examined the huge deer bed in the snow and then began following the tracks. Maybe I wasn't licked yet; the buck was heading right into chain saw country. The saws were silent now because it was lunch time. I thought if I could silently sneak slowly along the track, the old boy might blunder right into a gang of noisy men, and then turn and backtrack. If so, I'd be ready.

But the guys quit work not because of lunch, but because of the brutal weather. They had disturbed my serenity for a day and a half, and now that I needed them, they had deserted me. It was useless to stay on the buck's track. It was snowing so hard the tracks were obliterated in minutes, and he was traveling too fast for me to catch up.

The weather was better on Saturday, and I saw 14 does, but all their male relatives avoided me. The curtain came down on another fine season. A few of Joe's neighbors also had bagged bucks, and our immediate party had gone three for four. Too bad I had gone zero for two.

To become a true deer hunter, I feel a person should learn a lesson from every mistake and never make the same mistake twice. I had run out of round-nosed 180-grain bullets, but felt the more pointed 150-grainers would provide adequate killing power. I still feel that's true, but I'm not so sure when it comes to brush punching capability. My scope is right on the money and I had centered the crosshairs finely on the shoulder of the buck I wounded at only thirty



yards. I'm convinced that the pointed bullet was deflected by some pine branches just enough to prevent a killing shot. If I had used heavier, blunt-nosed 180s, deflection would have been less drastic, and I probably would have tagged that fine buck. I also learned to keep my scope covers on during bad weather.

It takes only an instant to pop them off. I probably could have done so and shot the blizzard buck in his bed before he ever flinched.

As I said before, I killed bucks early during the past few seasons. I was beginning to get complacent, thinking the game was easy. I needed a slap in the face to knock me down a few pegs, and to be reminded that the sport is difficult and challenging. Success is never guaranteed. That's what makes buck hunting so special.

# Questions & Answers

**By Lantz A. Hoffman, Director**

**Bureau of I&E**

**S**INCE THE agency first announced the statewide implementation of the bonus deer initiative, it's become apparent that many people are not sure how this new deer management strategy applies to hunters. Following is a series of the most commonly asked questions accompanied with brief answers.

## **Bonus Tags and Combination Licenses—How do they differ?**

A bonus tag permits a properly licensed hunter to take an additional antlerless deer during the regular firearms antlerless, late archery, or muzzleloader seasons.

A combination license is a bonus tag with a muzzleloader stamp attached, permitting the holder to take an additional antlerless deer during the regular firearms antlerless deer or muzzleloader season. It accommodates hunters who bypassed the opportunity to purchase a muzzleloader stamp prior to the September 30 deadline.

## **How will bonus tags and combination licenses be issued?**

Beginning October 3rd, county treasurers will receive and process, by mail, requests for regular antlerless deer licenses. Then, on October 24th, the remaining unsold allocations will become available as bonus tags, combination licenses, or regular antlerless licenses. Resident and nonresident hunters may purchase these tags and licenses from county treasurers over-the-counter or by mail. They will be issued on a first-come, first-served basis. 1988 regulations limit each hunter to only one bonus tag or combination license.

## **Wasn't the 1988 allocation inflated to sell more licenses?**

The allocation is up solely because of the need to harvest more antlerless deer. Revenues generated from the sale of antlerless licenses are never considered. Allocations are based on where a county's post-season deer population should be with respect to overwintering carrying capacity. Allocations are formulated only to help achieve the population goal set for each county management unit.

## **How many bonus tags and combination licenses will be available?**

That's difficult to predict. It will depend on the status of each county's allocation on October 24 and the subsequent demand for regular antlerless licenses. On October 23 last year, there were approximately 168,000 unsold antlerless licenses in 53 counties.

## **Can bonus tags and combination licenses be used anywhere?**

No. The purpose of bonus tags and combination licenses is to harvest more license allocations are under utilized. They are valid only in the county of issue—and only during the regular antlerless firearms, late archery, and muzzleloader seasons.

## **Can a hunter have a muzzleloader stamp and a combination license?**

A hunter with a regular muzzleloader stamp does not need a combination license—only a bonus tag to harvest a bonus antlerless deer. He is not eligible for a regular antlerless license.

## **Can bonus tags and combination licenses be used to take a buck?**

No. Bonus tags and combination licenses may be used to harvest only antlerless deer.



**BRIAN SHINDLEDECKER, 13, Sandy Lake, dropped this Warren County doe at 225 yards with a single shot from his 6mm in the afternoon of the final day of last year's extended antlerless season.**

**Can bonus deer be taken in the buck and archery seasons?**

Bonus tags and combination licenses are not valid during the early archery and buck seasons. They may be used to harvest bonus antlerless deer only during the regular antlerless firearms, late archery or muzzleloader seasons.

**If a hunter takes a deer in the regular archery season, can he hunt in the buck season?**

If a deer was taken in the archery season, the hunter has already used his deer tag. He may not hunt in the buck season. He may, however, purchase a bonus tag or combination license and harvest an antlerless deer in the regular antlerless firearms, late archery, or muzzleloader season. If the hunter had previously purchased a muzzleloader stamp, he would need only a bonus tag.

**If a hunter takes a legal buck in the buck season and also has an antlerless license, can he hunt in the regular antlerless season?**

Not unless he also has a bonus tag. A regular antlerless license is no longer valid after a deer has been taken in the regular archery or buck season.

**If a hunter takes a buck in the buck season, and also has a muzzleloader stamp, can he hunt in the regular antlerless season?**

Yes, but he must purchase a bonus tag. With a regular muzzleloader stamp, the bonus tag is valid in the issuing county during both the antlerless firearms and muzzleloader seasons, but only for antlerless deer.

**If a hunter doesn't take a legal buck, but has both an antlerless license and a bonus tag for the same county, can he kill two antlerless deer — one right after the other?**



When an antlerless license and bonus tag are issued for the same county, and the hunter has not already taken a deer in the archery or buck seasons, he may shoot two antlerless deer back-to-back.

**If, as an example, a hunter has an antlerless license for Mifflin County, and a bonus tag for Juniata, can he take an antlerless deer in each county on the same day?**

Yes. A hunter's ability to take an antlerless deer in two different counties in one day is limited only by his time and mobility.

**If a hunter has a bonus tag and a muzzleloader stamp, can he take his bonus deer first during the antlerless firearms season and then take another deer of either sex during the extended season?**

If he has not already taken a buck — yes. The same would hold true for a person with a bonus tag and an archery stamp. A bonus deer should not be construed as a "second" deer. In any number of situations it is possible to take the bonus deer first.

**If a person hunts unsuccessfully in the archery, buck and antlerless firearms**

seasons then decides to hunt antlerless deer in the muzzleloader or extended archery season, what tags and stamps must he have?

Should bonus tags still be available, he would need a combination license to hunt with a flintlock rifle. If he wants to use a bow, he needs both an archery stamp and a bonus tag to harvest two deer.

### **How many deer can a hunter take during the extended seasons?**

It depends on what licenses he holds. If a hunter was unsuccessful in the early seasons and holds a bonus tag along with an archery or muzzleloader stamp, he could take two: a buck and an antlerless deer—or two antlerless deer. A person with a combination license may take only one antlerless deer in the extended season.

### **What about the Special Regulations Areas?**

In Allegheny County and the Southeast Special Regulations Area, antlerless deer may be hunted from November 28, 1988 through January 7, 1989. Antlerless deer licenses, bonus tags, and combination licenses are valid in the issuing county during the entire period. A hunter with an antlerless

license and a bonus tag or combination license may take two antlerless deer. If a hunter has not already killed a buck and holds an archery or muzzleloader stamp, he could take a buck and an antlerless deer—or two antlerless deer.

### **Where can I buy my antlerless license, bonus tag, or combination license; how do I apply; and what are the fees?**

Antlerless licenses, bonus tags, and combination licenses are sold only by county treasurers. Antlerless license applications come with the regular hunting license. Bonus tag and combination license applications are in the HUNTING AND TRAPPING DIGEST. Antlerless licenses and bonus tags: \$5.50; Combinations: \$11.00.

As most new regulations, the bonus deer initiative is somewhat confusing. It needn't be, however. A sportsman should think of a bonus tag as just an antlerless deer license—which, from a management standpoint, is all that it actually is. A bonus deer tag entitles the holder to hunt for an antlerless deer in addition to what he's traditionally been allowed to take. The tag is valid in the regular antlerless deer season and, with appropriate licenses, in the late archery and muzzleloader seasons.

## **Subscription Increase**

Effective October 1, GAME NEWS subscription rates will become \$9 a year and \$25.50 for three years, and the cover price will go to \$1. For Canada and other foreign countries the rate will be \$10 per year. Although the agency has and will continue to underwrite a substantial portion of GAME NEWS production costs, escalating printing and mailing costs have made it necessary to pass on some of those costs to you, our subscribers.

While a 50 percent increase may seem dramatic, the truth is that even at \$9 a year, the cost of having GAME NEWS delivered to your home, month after month, is a bargain.

GAME NEWS is not only the most popular outdoor magazine in the state, but also the most authoritative. With GAME NEWS you get the latest information on hunting and other outdoor activities (except fishing and boating, of course), wildlife management, natural resource conservation and much more.

In the meantime, however, we suggest you extend your subscription now, under our current \$6 and \$16.50 rates, and extend or start gift subscriptions for family members and friends so they, too, can enjoy the biggest little outdoor magazine around.





**I WAS staying at a cabin along a lonely mountain road. It was cozy inside, as I sat reading in the stillness, but outside something in the way a bare branch kept tapping at the window seemed to speak to me. I felt compelled to take a walk.**

## On A Winter Mountain

**By Ken Wolgemuth**

**I**T'S EASY to be confident in August, in the city, when sunlight gleams on a thousand windows and the laughter of the crowd is in your ears. I find myself strutting and smiling. I find myself believing not only that I understand the world, but that I, personally, have also had a hand in making it turn. In the summertime I am master of all things — as long as the sun is shining.

Then at night, as I lie sleepless, the wind will rustle the leaves outside, or a screech owl will take to wailing. I remember a night, in the winter, deep in the pine-dark folded ridges of northern Pennsylvania, when my confidence collapsed like a house of cards.

I was staying at a cabin along a lonely mountain road. It was bright and cozy inside, as I sat reading in the stillness, but outside something in the way a bare branch kept tapping at the window

seemed to speak to me, and I felt compelled to take a walk. I put on my parka, my cap and my gloves, closed the door on the warmth of the fire and set off.

There was snow on the ground, and the night was moonless; the only light was that of the stars. At the edge of the forest I turned to see the cabin—its chimney with a plume of smoke; its windows golden rectangles—huddled small and toylike beneath the ridge and the icy winter sky.

### **Closed In Around Me**

In the forest the hemlocks closed in around me, their boughs bent down with snow. It was dark, darker than any night I had known. I remembered, too late, the flashlight on the cabin table. It didn't really matter. I knew the route for I had passed this way before. As I edged cautiously through the trees, snow



**SUCH IS the view from a winter mountain. It is often breathtaking; it is always humbling. That is what I remember as I lie in my city bed on summer nights.**

creaking under my boots, my eyes adjusted to the darkness.

Almost unconsciously I found myself heading for a spot I had visited in the summertime. It's an airy perch affording a good view of the countryside, a vantage point from which to regard the world and be regarded in turn.

### Round Portals

Soon the walking was easier. I came to a stream that cuts its way down through the hills and struck the narrow path that runs along its bank. At some places the water rushed and roared at my side, tumbling among rocks or spilling over chutes, spawning foam that shone eerily in the night. At others it slowed and grew quiet, and I saw it only here and there, through gaps in its icy coat, round portals filled with a whispering blackness and dancing reflections of stars.

When I came to a fallen tree that angles across the stream I turned and trudged up the mountainside, grasping at trunks and branches for support. There was no path to follow, but I knew that if I kept to a straight line I would arrive at the place I remembered.

I emerged at last into a little clearing high on the mountain's broad lap. The weeds of summer, now brittle and dead, rustled softly as I passed, and shook a

dusting of snow from their crowns. Off to one side there was a cabin, an old homestead. Its door was missing, its roof was caving in, its windows were without glass, pits of blackness in weathered walls of silver-gray. When I turned to see the way I had come a panorama of ridge and valley spread itself in darkness, in absolute stillness, to the limits of my sight.

I sat there on the old sagging step, and leaned back against the doorjamb to look up at the sky, at the stars, at more stars than I ever dreamed existed. I sat there quietly, for many minutes, and the stars drew nearer and nearer, as they do in the mountains. I heard the muffled rushing of the stream below, and felt the heat slowly seeping from my body—felt myself merging into this forest world, becoming with each passing moment less a man and more a rock, an icy spur of the great mountain itself. Soon I was very cold, and my eyes were filled with stars, nothing but stars. I was mesmerized with the sparkling, swirling number of them. I shook my head to break the spell, I looked out over the world and I gasped—suddenly the world was blue.

Yes, blue, I swear it. Whether from some optical illusion, or some weird alchemy in the starlight and the winter air, the ground was blue, the trees were blue; the weeds, the shed, the massive ice-curtains clinging to the cliffs, all blue—a soft blue glow with millions of sapphire scintillations. Glints of light from ice and snow were like music made visible—like random notes from a tiny toy piano transmuted, somehow, into light. The entire landscape unrolling itself at my feet shimmered in its length and breadth.

My head began to swim. I instinctively clutched for support at the shed's old timbers, at the weathered remains of a dead man's dream, and I looked out in wonder over the rocks and the frozen



forests now adrift in the blue depths of the galaxy.

I took a deep breath, and tasted an air flavored of pine-resin and ice—air so cold, so nearly liquid, that it seemed to settle of its own weight not into my lungs but into my soul. Suddenly summer's confidence shattered, and I was confronted with the reality of my stature in the world. I knew not who I was, or where I was, or why. I knew that, wrapped in my coat, I moved through this frozen land like a feeble spark; that I could be snuffed out in an instant, and that I would not be missed.

Such is the view from a winter mountain. It is often breathtaking; it is always humbling. That is what I remember as I lie in my city bed on summer nights, as the owl screams. In return for truth we forfeit security. We learn to live with the knowledge that the world outside has plans that go beyond our little wants, our petty fears. I hear the branches pawing at the window.

The night wind rustles the leaves as we slumber; patient roots swell and grope in the sidewalk cracks. The great glass-and-steel city is but a larger clearing in the wilderness.

## *Books in Brief...*

(Order from publisher, not from Game Commission)

**BROWN FEATHERS . . .** *Waterfowling Tales and Upland Dreams*, by Steven J. Mulak, Stackpole Books, P.O. Box 1831, Harrisburg, PA 17105, 224 pp., \$20 delivered. Most hunting books deal with the game and the guns and the dogs, and that's okay. Most readers don't expect more in this field. But occasionally someone broadens the horizons to include the small human dramas which in real life are the background within which the hunting occurs. That's the path Mulak follows, working carefully with subdued touches, and he does it well. He's not Turgenev or Hemingway—who is?—but he's in there with Ruark, and that's not bad. A different kind of hunting book.

**MacQuarrie Miscellany**, by Gordon MacQuarrie, Willow Creek Press, P.O. Box 300, Wautoma, WI 54982, 204 pp., \$19.50. A collection of "Old Duck Hunter Association" columns, newspaper pieces and other works by one of the best outdoor story tellers. Originally appearing several decades ago, each of these 14 timeless pieces is here for the first time in book form. In addition to Old Duck Hunter stories, for which the author is probably most famous, are the "Jack Pine Joe" letters and other works.

**The Still-Hunter**, by Theodore S. Van Dyke, Gunnerman Press, P.O. Box 4292, Auburn Hills, MI 48057, 390 pp., \$21.95. First published in 1882, this has become one of the greatest deer hunting classics. Theodore Roosevelt felt every aspiring deer hunter should study this because it has so much to offer. While the technology has certainly changed over the past 106 years, whitetails haven't, and neither have the fundamental techniques successful hunters employ. With this reprint, today's sportsmen can easily obtain one of the most timeless books on a most timeless subject.

**Grits on Guns**, by Grits Gresham, Cane River Publishing, P.O. Box 4095, Prescott, AZ 86302, 332 pp., \$27.95 delivered. What with all his TV time and the most conspicuous cowboy hat since Elmer Keith's, ol' Grits is the most recognizable outdoor writer in the country, and that could make some reactionaries question his credentials as a gunwriter. But truth is, Grits has been a hunter and a shooter all his life—with worldwide experience—and for 15 years has been the firearms editor for "Sports Afield," so when it comes to guns he knows whereof he speaks. This book is essentially a wide-ranging collection of almost 100 of his columns, updated a bit as he felt necessary. There's good solid information on scores of subjects, and it's presented so easily and informally that it's absorbed without effort.



**THE TURKEY** started to walk faster, and soon I could see his head and neck. When he emerged from behind a mound of dirt I could see his full body.

# THE HUNT

**By Robert Stoudt**

**T**HE SOUND of hushed footsteps on our cabin floor wakened me. Trying to focus my eyes in the pre-dawn darkness, I could see the form of my father as he stepped outside to turn on the bottled gas. With a distinct pop, a dim gas light came to life. I slowly eased out of my sleeping bag, only to be startled when my feet touched the ice cold floor. The sleeping bag invited me back, but with great regret, I declined. Dad was already eating when I sat down.

"Well, Dad," I said in a hushed whisper so as not to awaken the rest of my family, "do you think we'll get one?"

"I've never bagged one before," he replied.

"Where are we going to hunt?" I asked.

"Up the mountain, along the clearing."

The final preparation before a hunt is often spent in quiet anticipation, and this spring gobbler season was no exception. Not much else was said until we were in our camouflage suits and preparing to leave.

"I'll work the call and you carry the shotgun," he said.

"What if I see one?"

"Well, then, I guess it's up to you."

## Only Sounds

We stepped outside into the crisp mountain air, with its pine scent and the odor of smoke from our cabin's woodstove. The only sounds were those of Hunter Run as its waters rushed over the rocky streambed. Daylight was just beginning to brighten the horizon, and it was still a bit chilly. I shivered, but the cold was only part of the reason.



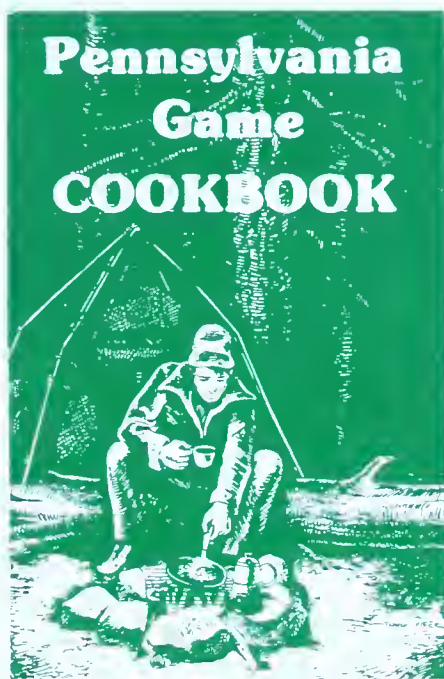
The mountain on which we were to hunt had a clearing at its base, a logging road twisting back and forth to the summit, and a clearcut at the top.

We made several calls in the clearing at the base of the mountain and then slowly worked our way up. We made another call at the halfway point, but again, got no reply. When we finally reached the clearcut we made another call, which was greeted by a thunderous reply from a gobbler. Apparently, he was on the other side of the mountain, where we had made our first call. After several minutes of calling back and forth, he hadn't moved in our direction. Our only hope was to cut across the clearing, halving the distance between us. With our best Indian sneak approach, we slipped back through the woods, carefully avoiding any missteps that would alarm the lovesick gobbler.

Finally, we came to a fallen tree and hid behind it to view the turkey's approach, if there was one. After several minutes, Dad called. No answer. He made another call, again without reply. Dad then resorted to his best lonely hen voice, and this time the turkey did respond. Suddenly, he was only 20 yards away, but the thick growth made it impossible to see him. I readied the gun and waited. The turkey kept up a steady racket of gobbles and came even closer. I could hear him walking on the dry leaves. Dad and I grinned at each other and then looked back in the turkey's direction.

The turkey started to walk faster, and soon I could see his head and neck and then its beard. His neck was a pale white, as only spring gobblers are. When he emerged from behind a mound of dirt, I could see his full body. His tailfeathers were spread out, revealing brilliant reds, yellows, and greens, and his wings were extended.

I took careful aim and slowly squeezed the trigger. The shot echoed through the mountains and the recoil



**Pennsylvania Game Cookbook** is a 96-page collection of delicious recipes submitted by **GAME NEWS** readers. It includes methods of preparing all kinds of game available in Pennsylvania, plus some recipes for moose, elk, and other species. \$4.00 delivered from **GAME NEWS** office.

caused me to lose sight of the turkey. Jumping over the deadfall, we quickly went to the spot where we had last seen the gobbler. There it lay. After much back slapping and congratulations, we stood in awe of the enormous bird. It was a marvelous trophy, one that gave me a memory which will last forever.

Bob Stoudt lives in Turbotville. This is his first published story, and we're sure it won't be his last. He's 14 years old.







# The Old Deer Hunter

By Ernest C. Aharrah

**T**HE OLD MAN moved quietly through the cold mist of the late November afternoon. It was the opening day of deer season. The mist had been continuous since he entered the woods hours ago. He moved a step at a time, pausing to look about in the gathering twilight. He listened intently, with each step, for sounds of animals on the move.

Darkness would come early this evening. It seemed that full light had never dawned. The low clouds and rain made most of the day seem an early morning gloom. Sufficient light would likely fade before the official close of shooting hours. It had been a quiet day in the field.

When he placed the young girl on watch for this one last drive of the day, he told her that if she got cold, or if the wait seemed too long, to go back to the camp. Other hunters from the party would no doubt pass her on their way. She could accompany them. Nevertheless, she was sufficiently wise to the woods to find her own way back. By now he was sure she was at camp, awaiting his return.

There was no need to hurry. Other seasons, many seasons, had passed and he had learned to take his time. He could still keep going all day while some of the younger hunters tired much earlier. He had no relentless urges to kill a buck. He had killed before and knew that the work begins with a successful shot. Now he was content to be afield, to enjoy the autumn woods and the wildlife. To enjoy the companionship of the hunt.

Two does moved from his right across the swale in front of him. They sensed his presence, gazed alertly, then turned toward the stand where he had left the girl. The old man froze and waited for the buck that might follow. As he leaned against a tree, his gaze sweeping

through the woods around him, he quickly decided not to fire if a buck appeared, in hopes it would follow the does and that the girl would still be waiting on stand.

The gray squirrel descended the oak tree to his left and dug in the leaves for an acorn stored there at an earlier time. He watched, amused, as the squirrel, carrying its treasure in its mouth, ran up the tree to perch on a limb and consume its evening meal. As he shifted his weight ever so slightly, the squirrel sensed the movement and chattered a warning. He smiled to himself, aware that the squirrel's chatter may have frightened the deer.

## A Doe and Her Fawns

Early in the morning, just as shooting hours began, he watched a doe and her fawn feeding. They were pawing the leaves aside in search of acorns. He had been excited by their presence. He could feel his adrenaline flowing. Without seeing him, the pair moved on through the woods. His thoughts now moved back to that morning hour.

A variety of animals depended on the acorns for sustenance. He thought of all the places he had seen where wild turkeys had scratched for acorns. Ruffed grouse fed on white oak acorns and this had been a bumper year for grouse.

Minutes passed and no antlers materialized. He moved stealthily forward, still aware that there could be a buck somewhere to his right. He paused with each step to survey the woods around him, paying particular attention to the area beyond where the does had passed.

As he approached the large rock beside the old timber road, where he had left the girl, he paused and waited. Sometimes a buck would stop at the edge of a road to test the air and to look for movement. The old man did not want to spook the deer and spoil her

## First-Time Hunters and Trappers

All first-time hunters and trappers are reminded they must take a Hunter Education course before they can buy a hunting license or a furtaker's license in Pennsylvania. Each year there is a rush of students trying to get into a course just before the season opens. It is impossible to take care of some of these, so they are disappointed. If you want to hunt or trap this year, it is advisable to take this course immediately. Check the sporting pages of your newspaper, your area sportsmen's club, or with the nearest Game Commission officer for dates and locations of courses.

*Do it now!*

shot. As he moved forward he was not at all surprised to see that she had gone.

He slipped quietly to the rock and sat. It was raining harder now. As the last light of day faded rapidly away, the temperature started to drop as well. It would be a cold evening. He slipped the cartridges from his rifle. The hunting day was over. A glance at his watch showed he had been right; legal shooting time had not yet arrived.

### Reluctant

He was reluctant to rise and return to camp. It was not unpleasant to sit in the rain and contemplate the events of the day and of other days and other seasons. The young lady was hunting in her first season. She was no 12-year-old, but she had not hunted until now. She had many seasons to enjoy. He hoped that she would have an opportunity to shoot a buck, but for this time he was content that he had shared her first day afield. She had done well.

He recalled how startled she had been by the wild turkey that had flown from the branches overhead as they entered the woods that morning. Why did turkeys not fly like that in turkey season? The sight of that magnificent wild-life had excited him, too.

The girl had stuck to her post

throughout the morning. Her account of deer that had passed her stand made the old man confident that she had remained alert and observant. From her chatter, at noon, in the warm camp, he was satisfied that she really did enjoy the woods and the wildlife around her. It was important to him that those he hunted with enjoyed the spirit of the hunt. That seemed more important than the killing.

He felt comfortable as they still hunted through the early afternoon. She moved quietly, although not as quietly as the old man himself, but he had had years of practice. His thoughts drifted to the other members of the hunting party. They were all younger than himself. He often referred to them as a bunch of kids. He often chided them for their lack of patience, for moving too fast when they were attempting to drive deer.

There had not been much shooting in the woods today. No one in the party had scored by noon, and the old man guessed nobody had later in the day either. The weather was not the most cooperative, but he could recall moving right into the midst of deer on other occasions in the same kind of cool damp weather. On such occasions the rain seemed to dampen the scent, making deer less wary.

He smiled as he remembered walking up to three deer lying in an old slashing during such a rain. He watched as they rose, stretched and moved a bit, only to decide they had been mistaken and to lie down again. He moved and disturbed the deer, that time, sending them fleeing. He was younger then; today he likely would have remained still much longer to observe their activities.

He thought of each of "those kids," and mused for a moment on their respective skills. They were an excellent group with which to hunt. Each was careful with firearms, observant, dedicated to the hunt. They were knowledgeable outdoorsmen. He enjoyed their company.

In his mind's eye he could picture



**THE MAJESTIC** animal raised its head and stood with antlers silhouetted against the sky. The old man smiled and waited until the buck continued his pursuit of the does.

their movements of the day. He knew these woods and where each had intended to spend the afternoon. One spent most of the afternoon in the old slash on the opposite side of the creek from where he hunted now. Another covered the old fields and orchards high on the hill to his right. He may have been the one who pushed the does in front of the old man earlier. The others were scattered throughout the area.

He was sure they were all in camp now. He could picture them gathered about the old wood burner, warming fingers and toes. There would be a lot of stories about the does they had seen. There might even have been a buck or two that had been glimpsed but that provided no shot.

A slight movement caught his eye. Turning his head slightly, he looked to the place he had assumed the does crossed. Again there was movement. He strained to make out the shape in the afterglow of day. He smiled as the buck, head down, on the trail of two does, stepped onto the old timber road above him. The majestic animal raised its head and stood with antlers silhouetted against the sky. The old man smiled and waited until the buck continued his pursuit of the does.

A cup of hot coffee would taste good. He rose and moved cautiously through



the gathering night, easing his way along. Even now, he might see more deer; he would hate to miss the chance to see game. It had been a good day. A very good day! The old man was satisfied. As he reached the road, he quickened his pace. He might just as well enjoy the coffee, the fire and the fellowship. He could tell some stories of his own, but tonight he would listen to the tales of others. Tomorrow, he would hunt again.

## Two Art Shows at Middle Creek

The Game Commission's Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area, on the Lancaster-Lebanon County border, will be the scene for two upcoming art shows sure to please outdoorsmen and art collectors. The first is the Middle Creek Art Show, which will feature the works of 40 artists. It will run from noon to 8 p.m., Friday, August 26; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, August 27; and from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, August 28. The second is the Middle Creek Decoy Show, which will feature the works of 25 invited decoy carvers. The decoy show will run from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, September 10, and from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday, September 11. Admission is free to both shows.

# Shotgunning

## For

## Grays

By George L. Harting

**W**EATHERMEN were on target; yesterday's rain ended during the night and shirt sleeve temperatures were predicted for the opener. As I turned the pickup into the parking lot, the rising sun silhouetted the trees on the eastern horizon. Anticipation to get on with the business of the early small game season ran high.

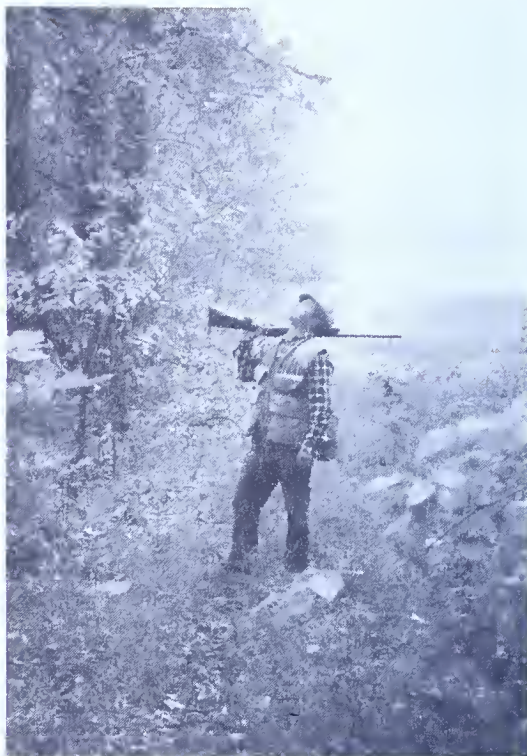
I pulled on my wading boots to make a dry crossing of the meadow brook. My plan was to hunt six large woodlots and the endless sequence of fence rows that connect them. It was habitat made to order for the squirrel hunter.

### Population Density

If I have my "druthers" on a warm October morning, I'll be shotgunning the woodlots for grays. Wildlife managers tell us forest game are in good supply and squirrels, in particular, are underharvested. I personally have heard of a suburban gardener who transferred 300 grays from his yard to already overpopulated woodlots. It is the density of bushytails in agricultural tree stands that promise exciting action and attract the outdoorsman.

"I haven't seen a squirrel this fall," was the report of a "big woods" county resident. During the same time slot, however, bushytails reached nuisance proportions in agricultural areas. What are the underlying factors contributing to such population variables?

In "Dutch Country" squirrels are known colloquially as "Aech Haas"—lit-



**FENCEROWS and woodlot borders are ideal. I've bagged more than one bushytail that had black stained feet, mute testimony to the species' preference for walnuts.**

erally, "oak rabbit." Oak trees, of course, are synonymous with food and shelter for bushytails, any they're a predominant woodlot species throughout the state. But there is more: field corn. In addition to being a major source of income for grain farmers, field corn can mean winter survival for grays. Experienced hunters know ground littered with corn from which the germ has been removed is a telltale sign squirrels are active in the area. The only remaining ingredients for optimum bushytail hunting are hickories and walnuts. When these trees are found in fence-rows and woodlot borders squirrels are sure to be nearby. I've bagged more than one bushytail that had black stained feet, mute testimony to the species' preference for walnuts.

Gray squirrels migrate. It's not that they accompany waterfowl south each fall, but they do find their way to the tables spread for their sustenance. It is, therefore, not by random election that adventurers choose shotgunning the woodlots in October.



My hunting area lays just above a creek bank and climbing the sheer cliff was the major chore for the day. Anticipation of the easy hunting after the initial climb, however, made the effort worthwhile. After pulling on my hunting shoes and concealing the waders in the underbrush I headed for the day's adventure.

The action began on a wooded hillock a couple hundred yards wide and three city blocks long; the mature timber suggested major den tree potential. On this excursion, however, I was awarded a special bonus. A stand of field corn stretched along the woodlot's southern border. Remembering that den trees and field corn contribute to prolific squirrel populations, my anticipation soared.

### The Art of Stalking

My hunting log indicates about 1100 gray squirrels represent my lifetime harvest. Stalking has been my tactic, a technique I honed into a productive art. These rodents abandon the safety of their dens on warm fall days. Feeding, burying grub for winter sustenance and fraternizing are the daily rituals. Like other wild animals, grays are extremely alert, agile and wary, and to harvest them consistently by stalking is an achievement.

Careful stalking exposes the hunter to a maximum number of targets. When one knows his terrain, especially where den trees are located, specific ploys can be devised to best hunt a given area. Stalking is done by moving slowly and deliberately, with the eyes alert for any movement that may occur. Walking with a broken gait through fallen leaves will match the sounds of feeding squirrels.

Slowly stalking the wooded border was my technique this day. I stayed



about 15 yards from the corn rows. My objective was to disturb the nutcrackers' breakfast and to intercept them as they scampered for the security of the woodlot den trees. The leaves dampened by the previous day's rain contributed to my successful stalking, and the warm sun seemed to stimulate the bushytails into an early morning feeding spree. By the time I reached the western border of the woodlot I had disturbed at least a dozen grays and the weight of four pressed heavily in my game pouch.

### A Scattergun, the Right Choice

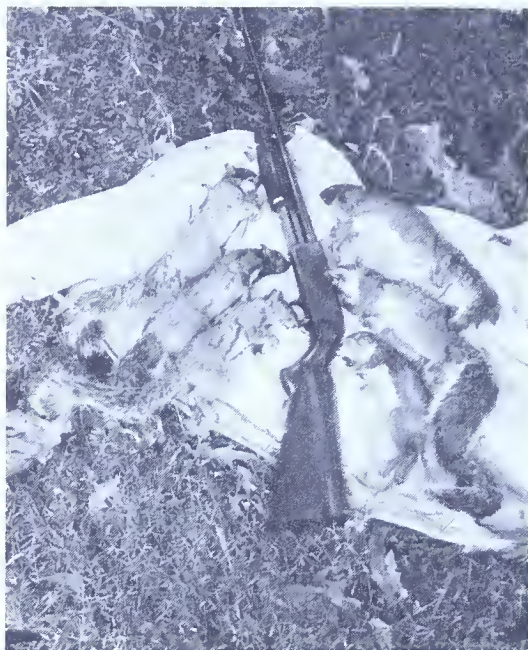
Hunter safety is a major concern for game managers and it has to be for hunters, too. A sportsman is promoting hunter safety when he chooses the shotgun for woodlot squirrel hunting. Despite the fact that many enthusiasts consider a top quality 22 with a powerful scope to be the ultimate squirrel outfit, I prefer the scattergun, while rimfires may be the right choice for the deep woods, I don't think they belong in woodlots. In such settings buildings are normally located within sight of the trails where game is harvested.

"WARNING: Keep Out of Reach of Children" is a conspicuous message printed on current boxes of 22 ammunition. "CAUTION: Dangerous Within 1½ Miles" is another message high-

## Thoughts While Walking

*The past never changes. You leave it and go on to the present, but it is still there, waiting for you to come back to it.*

—Corey Ford in "Road to Tinkhamtown"



lighted by ammunition manufacturers. Many among us contend those cautions suggest that the scattergun is, indeed, the proper choice for farm woodlots; the slow moving 22 is prone to ricochet.

Some rifle devotees feel the scattergun robs the gray squirrel of a sporting chance. Anybody who has spent any time in the woodlots, however, knows the longtails are no pushover for the nimrod who chooses the scattergun. Squirrels are every bit as cunning as cottontails. Their routes from feeding grounds to den trees are known well and rehearsed often. A hunter may think he has a bushytail trapped, but a wary gray can find the back side of every limb, then demonstrate his skill as an aerial acrobat, easily spanning four-foot clearings as he heads for his den tree. The bushytail is a match for even the most accomplished shotgun artist. To have, therefore, experienced early morning success with my Ithaca Model 37 was quite satisfying.

The second woodlot I hunted is only an acre. This stand has become less productive since lumbermen culled the

AS I field-dressed the pair that rounded out my daily limit I became aware that only an hour and a half of the new season had elapsed. I can't help but wonder how many more of the creatures I might have encountered.

large oaks, but I still visit it on my hunts. To reach it I follow a tangled fence row. Because of neglect this hedgerow is profusely marked by black walnut growth, and we know what that means for bushytails. After taking but a dozen paces along the trail I intercepted and harvested two feeding grays. They made desperate effort, however, to elude me, using every tactic a mature gray squirrel can muster.

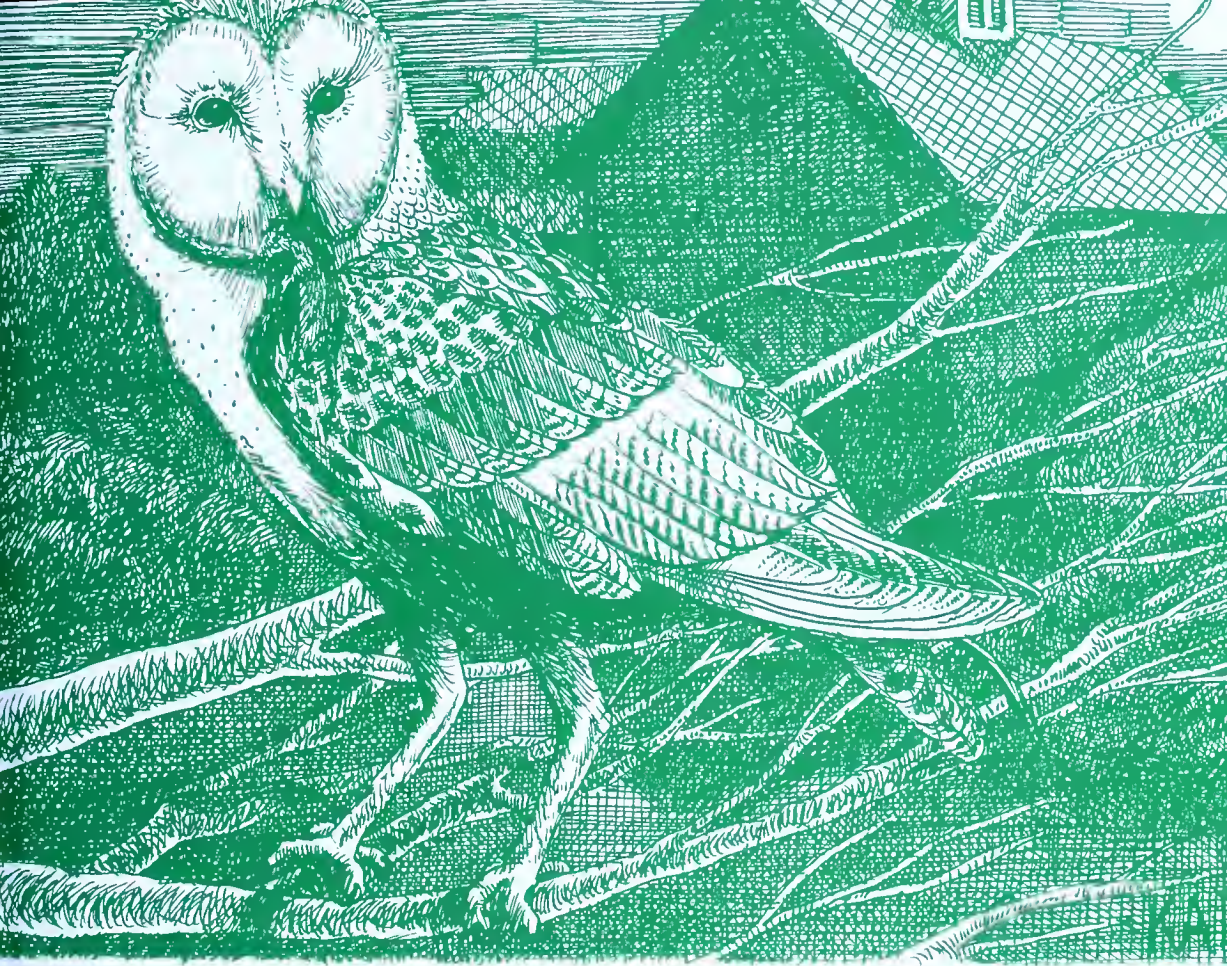
As I field-dressed the pair that rounded out the day's legal limit, I became aware that only an hour and a half of the new season had elapsed. I can't help but wonder how many more of these creatures I might have encountered had I carried out the mile-long stalk I had originally planned. Shotgunning woodlots for grays can be a unique productive experience.

### Good Eating—The Ultimate Return

The ultimate return, however, from my woodlot excursions is the delicious repast squirrels provide. When the lady in my house goes all out to please my palate, she does it with a pair of barbecued squirrel. Parboiled specimens are cut into pieces, then dredged into "Shake 'n Bake Original Barbecue Recipe For Chicken." Oil is placed in a heavy skillet and heated. The coated squirrel pieces are dropped into the hot oil and fried until lightly crusty on both sides.

A squirrel fry is the perfect choice for a bitter cold February evening. Squirrels contribute to gourmet eating and, after a hard day, are the perfect prelude to the Lazy-Boy ritual where, before an open fire, one mingles den dreams with den trees.





No vegetarians, these . . .

## BARN OWLS

(*Tyto alba*)

By Carsten Ahrens

THROUGHOUT my boyhood the cupola of our big old barn was home to barn owls. My brothers and I had built a precarious passageway from the barn's highest crossbeam to the square opening in the roof that gave access to the cupola, an area big enough to shelter the three of us at one time. "Shelter," however, is probably the wrong verb, the cupola was quite out of shape, miserably cold in winter, wet during a down pour, drafty all the time, and had been hit by lightning twice. Of course, only the passage of years brings that to mind. Just the excitement of getting there via homemade ladders and narrow planks far from the barn floor below made the climb to the "owl-loft" a real adventure.

No matter how quiet we tried to be we never surprised the owls. Without fail, every time we approached the ceiling opening they flew downward into the gloomy barn interior and affixed themselves to the darkest areas on one of the haymows. They never left the cupola during the day to fly in the sunlit landscape we liked to survey.

As we started our climbs to the birds' inner sanctuary, they were apt to scold—sometimes softly, oftentimes a bit shrilly. Then, just before taking off, they would snap their beaks in disgusted "clips" to show their annoyance at being disturbed. At no time would they hoot like barred owls, taunt like great horned owls, or "qua-v-v-er" eerily in spine-tin-



### Question

Are battery powered archery sights legal in Pennsylvania?

### Answer

Yes, providing the sight does not cast a beam of light on the animal being hunted.

gling horror as many folks think owls do. Occasionally, early in the year, we were startled by a high-pitched wail—sort of a scream—from the cupola. We would wait and wait, expectantly. It wasn't repeated, but we knew we hadn't imagined it.

### Monkey-face

If you saw just one picture of a barn owl, you'd recognize it at once when confronted by a live one. Each is not only strikingly different from other birds but also from other owls. The beak curves down from a white facial disk edged with brown. An exaggerated "widow's peak" on the face gives the impression of being half an apple cut lengthwise. Their black eyes consider you with solemnity. Each bird will stand, hunched forward, on long, somewhat knock-kneed legs; the long, wide wings poised ready for instant flight. The feathers on their upper parts are golden gray with buff, black and white markings. Below, the feathers are whitish, flecked with darker spots.

Some of our neighbors called them "monkey-faced" owls, which never seemed particularly appropriate to us. But then, "barn owl" is inaccurate, too. I've found barn owls nesting in all manner of places. Away from home I've

found nests on a sheer cliff, in an abandoned hawk nest, in a church steeple, and—on a treeless western area—in a burrow probably dug by a badger.

### Eggs Without a Nest

Barn owls are found nearly worldwide. In North America, they nest over the lower three-fifths of the United States and down through Mexico. Those in our barn near Lake Erie, therefore, were at the very northern limit of their range.

We were always amazed that the owls had no knack for nest building. Surely if no-account house sparrows could turn a collection of trash into a nest then barn owls should do something to protect and comfort their eggs and young. But not a twig was carried in, not a feather was pulled from the breast to soften the windswept and rainwashed planks of the cupola floor.

The eggs were laid on the bare cold wood, often on the last days of February or early in March. They were completely uncolored, unspotted—just plain white. Clutches ranged from as few as five to as many as 11.

### All Sizes of Siblings

As soon as the first egg appeared it was imperative that it be kept warm, so one or the other parent was always on the egg. Winds would howl and snow would sift through the louvered sides, but the female would go on laying eggs and both birds continued incubating.

Dad warned us to stay away from the cupola at this time, for our visits might lessen the chance of the eggs' survival. Of course we didn't obey. The old birds always reluctantly left the spot as we approached, and the wind would scatter the eggs; there was nothing but other eggs to hinder their being rolled about. The birds had to round up the eggs when we left because Dad insisted that if we handled them they would be abandoned by the parents. On many visits, especially on bitter days, we found both birds hunched together, brooding the eggs.

After the first egg was laid, the others



followed at two- or three-day intervals. Two weeks or longer might elapse between the appearance of the first and last eggs. The first egg would hatch in 22 or 23 days. For days, then, the first hatchling was surrounded by eggs. As young hatched the old birds took turns at incubating the remaining eggs and gathering food to satisfy the growing young. By the time the last owlet hatched, the oldest sibling seemed enormous. Flexing his pinfeathers and strutting about the cupola floor, he often knocked down and tramped the helpless younger ones. They had a hard time, we thought.

On our visits the owlets scattered as far as they could to the corners of the aerie. There they faced us, heads drawn in, wings arched overhead; they hissed like snakes. But either we were not that obtrusive or the young owls were tough, for I cannot remember a single spring on the farm that didn't produce, along with the colts, piglets, calves and chicks, a cupola full of barn owls.

Young barn owls, like young birds in general, are usually hungry, but their cries for food are usually heard at night rather than by day. Every afternoon, about four o'clock, their hard-to-describe noises reached us on the barn floor, several stories below. The old owls paid no heed; they just sat like statues. The sounds of the owlets increased in volume as the evening wore on until finally, just after sunset, the female left the cupola and ventured abroad. We could distinguish the adults by their sizes. The female was noticeably larger. Her mate continued to sleep until the afterglow was almost gone before he flew out to join in the search for food. That was the only time we saw them flying outside the barn; barn owls are most nocturnal, far more than are the short-eared and the great horned species. Ordinarily, our barn owls waited until complete darkness before embarking on their hunting forays. It was likely the owlets' hunger drove the

female forth a little earlier than usual.

She made several successful trips before her mate joined her. As long as we could discern their goings and comings it was evident that the female was the better hunter. She brought several rats or mice to every one of his. She seemed to concentrate on the fields and meadows close by, bringing in a wide variety of prey—voles, moles, and at least once, a bat. Her mate made longer trips, to the nearby swamp, for larger prey: a grebe, a bittern, once a bullfrog. All night long the two birds worked quietly, flying on all but soundless wings, hunting for food to feed their hungry young family. As barn owls often search for food in pitch darkness, their ears must be their primary aid in the nightlong search for prey.

### Never Gone Long

As long as I can remember, a pair of barn owls occupied our cupola. At times, for a week or so, the owls disappeared, but they were never gone long enough for us to believe they migrated. Had we banded them, we would have known whether it was the same pair that lived in our barn all those years, or if some of their offspring became the "old birds." As soon as the young owls could fly they promptly left the barn. They normally remained in the vicinity for a few days, then disappeared, probably to find territories and mates.

The old barn, now over a hundred years old, is still standing, but a storm, a score of years ago, carried away the old cupola. The owls disappeared. The new metal ventilator that replaced the old wooden structure had no unbarred recesses in which owls might nest.

Except for great horned owls, barn owls have little to fear other than the superstitions of man. These have been known to stimulate him to use his gun against what are actually his priceless friends. No farmer or gardener has a better though often unknown aide than the winged mouser in his barn.



**AS I SAT reminiscing I saw the deer approach. The wind was in my favor. A yearling led the group of three. I was encouraged but not excited. I had time to get ready.**

## **The Church Bell**

**By Brian D. Farleigh**

**T**HE CHURCH BELL chimed at 7:00 and 9:00 every morning. You could hear it from anywhere along the edge of the mountain overlooking town. A few years back the real bell was replaced by a tape recording, but the songs are the same. Much is the same on the mountain, too. You can still hear the cars going to work, the quarry whistles signalling the descent of men, and the school buzzer coercing students to their lessons. The winds still cut sharply; the gray squirrels are still a devilish, noisy nuisance—especially to a deer hunter sitting uncomfortably on a tree limb, trying to remain unseen and unheard between the shivers. The early morning sun is still glorious—welcome and bright, indeed inspiring—and its little warmth is still a small blessing.

It was the final day of doe season. I sat 20 feet up in a black oak, higher than I wanted to be, along a lightly used rocky

trail. I'd hunted here years ago, as had my father. We called the place "the point." But after a few years and almost as many bucks, I abandoned the stand, thinking it was worn out. But now I was back. Maybe because of the memories. Maybe because of the view—you could watch the whole town awaken in the gray light of dawn. And it always surprised me how sounds carried up the mountain. I could hear my sister's children frolicking before school, a full three-quarters of a mile below, in the same backyard where I grew up.

The mountain was flat on top, an Appalachian plateau blanketed with 20-year-old scrub oak. The side of the mountain was precipitous and rocky, with larger oaks that had survived the brush fires that had frequently singed the mountain top during my boyhood. My stand was one such large oak 40 yards down over the crest. The steep-



ness of the slope made it hospitable to deer precisely because it was inhospitable to men. It was tough to walk there and impossible to walk quietly. Deer could move along the mountainside and remain unseen by hunters stalking the level ground on top. It was a reasonable spot for a late season deer stand and an experienced hunter. It was a good spot for a man to let time go lightly on return to his hometown haunts and friends after a 20-year absence.

### Shared Our Boyhoods

Jeff, Richard and I had shared our boyhoods. In our youth, we hunted everything available: pigeons and rodents with 22s, rabbits and squirrels with shotguns, and then deer with big game rifles. We hunted after school, on Saturdays and during vacations—every free moment. Jeff was the best woodsman. He always discovered the new habitat to hunt, the new techniques and the best times. He did the scouting for the rest of us. Richard was undeniably the best marksman, and he was quick. If a rabbit burst from heavy cover, Jeff and I shot impulsively, as fast as possible. Otherwise, we didn't get to shoot at all. Try as we might, we never approached Richard's accuracy. But that was when we were boys, 20 years ago. Things change.

Jeff and his 12-year-old son Steve stood several hundred yards out the ridge. Jeff had filled his tag the day before, so he stood empty-handed while Steve endured the cold of his first deer hunt. Richard stood on the flat ground of the mountain plateau. He had hunted there for years. It was traditional.

As I sat reminiscing I saw the deer approach. The wind was in my favor. A yearling led the group of three. I was encouraged but not excited. I had time to get ready. Being high in the tree, I felt certain I wouldn't be noticed and my scent trail leading to the tree was two hours old. Furthermore, yearlings are not noted for caution or shyness. I had never been noted for my marksmanship, but that was years ago. Now my rifle was new and very accurate. I was anxious to



**THE SNOWY EGRET** is the seventh species in the Game Commission's Working Together for Wildlife program. The program is intended to generate support for nongame animals. This year's snowy egret patch is priced at \$3, delivered. Patches of the bluebird, bobcat, kestrel and elk are still available; those of the osprey and river otter are sold out. Decals (\$1 each) of the first six species are still available, but none of the egret is being made. Order from the Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.

prove myself to Jeff and Richard. I would wait for the deer to close the distance and then take the adult doe second in line. Very neat. Very traditional. Quite incorrect. The yearling stopped abruptly and checked the air, the old sixth-sense phenomenon. As she quickly changed direction, I just as quickly changed my mind—she'd be a fine trophy. I fired and then lowered my gun to watch her fall. An oak branch fell instead. I fired three more times as she ran away. Clean misses. Steve fired twice and missed as the deer ran out the ridge. Then, as they broke over the top of the mountain some 300 yards west of my stand, Richard dropped the adult doe. One shot. As I moved out the ridge toward my friends, the church bell sounded. Just as it had for years. It was nine o'clock. Much remained unchanged on the mountain.



# FIELD NOTES



## Don't Delay

**SOMERSET COUNTY**—Reminder: All first time hunters and trappers, regardless of age, must complete the mandatory 10-hour hunter/trapper education course before purchasing a license. If this applies to you, don't put off taking the course. Most are given in August and September, a few are given in the spring. Don't wait until the major hunting seasons are about to begin because you'll probably be too late. Furthermore, hunters planning a western trip should make sure they can satisfy the out of state requirements before leaving home, or else the long awaited hunting trip may turn out to be only a sight seeing one.—WCO Clifford E. Guindon, Boswell.



## Reprieve

**MERCER COUNTY**—When Deputy Ron Powell saw the driver in front of him hit a pheasant he stopped and examined the bird and found it sporting a Game Commission band, identifying it as one of the newly released ringneck-Sichuan hybrids. After Ron recorded the number he started to pry the band off the bird's leg, but all of a sudden, the bird came to life, flogged Ron with its wings, and then flew off.—WCO John McKellop, Sandy Lake.

## Lasting Benefits

**BEDFORD COUNTY**—When I was visiting Robert Rock, a local resident known for making hand-crafted banjos, I asked him what his favorite wood is for making the instruments. Bob said his favorite banjo by far is one he made from chestnut, and that the wood came from a tree given to him 50 years ago by then District Game Protector Al Bachman.—WCO Dave Koppenhaver, Everett.

## Mixed Company

**BRADFORD COUNTY**—WCO Bill Bower and I were surveying waterfowl on the Susquehanna River last spring when we observed a flock of five large birds take off from the water. One was a Canada goose, three were domestic white geese, and the fifth looked like a cross between the other two types. Under the circumstances, however, I don't know whether the wild goose became tame or if the domestic birds had gone wild.—WCO A. Dean Rockwell, Sayre.

## Staging a Comeback

**MCKEAN COUNTY**—Last February I found a golden eagle feeding on a roadkilled deer I had placed out in the woods, and in March I had the pleasure of watching one immature and three adult bald eagles at the Kinzua Reservoir. I hope these are indications of a better environment for all of us.—WCO John Dzemyan, Smethport.

## Not Grouse Hunters

**DAUPHIN COUNTY**—Most people have a negative reaction to a clearcut, but wild animals sure don't. The trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants that quickly spring up in recently cut areas provide more food and cover, and sustain a wider variety of wildlife, than any other habitat type except wetlands.—WCO Skip Littwin, Hummelstown.



## Not Any More

**SCHUYLKILL COUNTY**—When many people think of this county they picture anthracite mines and barren stripmine sites. Actually, however, this county has beautiful mountains, spectacular valleys, many clean streams and lakes, and much more. Did you know, for example, that this county leads the Southeast Region in deer, bear, turkey and beaver harvests? We may be the best kept secret in the state.—WCO John Denchak, Tamaqua.

## Adapting

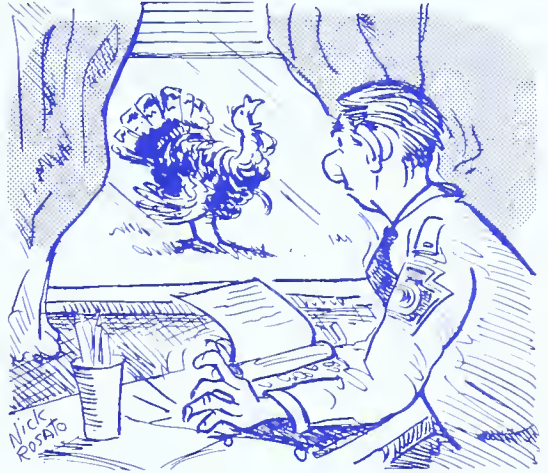
Crop rotation has long been known to reduce soil erosion, control weeds and improve soil productivity. Patton area farmers Earl and Paul Long, however, have found another reason for rotating crops—deer damage. On one of their fields, which is located next to a large forested tract closed to hunting, it was impossible for them to grow two consecutive harvestable corn crops. It seemed deer would establish feeding patterns in the field the first year, and almost wipe out the crop in the second. They've learned though, that if they don't plant corn in consecutive years, deer never get accustomed to feeding in the field, and in the years when they do plant corn, they harvest enough to justify the planting.—LMO Barry Zaffuto, Ebensburg.

## It Happens

**CRAWFORD COUNTY**—While checking wood duck nest boxes last spring, Erie National Refuge personnel found evidence of a very persistent raccoon. They found a nest box (the type constructed of two plastic buckets fastened together) with a greatly enlarged entrance hole. Inside were egg shells and the remains of a hen. Apparently, a raccoon had gnawed away at the entrance hole until it was able to get completely inside and then dine on the occupants.—WCO Robert Criswell, Saegertown.

## Need Protecting

When I was a high school student I belonged to the Future Farmers of America, and I still vividly remember working on a demonstration project that showed how fencing streams from livestock reduces soil erosion, improves water quality and provides wildlife habitat. Now, 30 years later, I find myself promoting the same conservation practice. In an effort to show farmers the value of protecting streambanks, the Game Commission is buying materials and erecting fences at selected sites, including one in my land management group. We hope the demonstration areas will encourage more farmers to protect these important, yet fragile areas on their properties.—LMO R.B. Belding, Waynesburg.



## How Big's the Bird?

**JUNIATA COUNTY**—Last April a turkey sounded off every time my wife slammed the screen door on her way to work. It wasn't long before she named the bird "Tom," and I was told under no uncertain terms that the bird was off limits for me. When the season opened my wife told me that I had no sooner left on patrol than the gobbler strutted out of the woods, strolled across our front yard, and spent the morning in the field behind our barn. As I write this, the spring season is still in and I'm sitting here contemplating what it would be like to eat nothing but peanut butter sandwiches and sleep in a barn.—WCO Dan Clark, Honey Grove.

## Attractive Nuisances

**LEBANON COUNTY**—Insurance companies classify swimming pools as attractive nuisances. Many wildlife officers probably do, too. It's not uncommon for me to remove a mallard and her brood from a pool, rescue (carefully) a clumsy skunk that went for a dip or an opossum that took a dive. I was glad, however, that the deer that decided to take a plunge was able to get itself out of the pool before I arrived.—WCO Gary Smith, Lebanon.



## Just Relaxin'

**GREENE COUNTY**—Investigating a report of an injured goose, I found the bird and, just like the caller said, it was standing on only one leg. What the caller—and many others—didn't know was that waterfowl and many other birds often rest by standing on only one leg. It seems awkward to us, but it obviously works for them.—WCO Robert P. Shaffer, Carmichaels.

## Lots of Advice

**LYCOMING COUNTY**—I never realized how many people read Field Notes until I wrote one about seeing nothing but lots of squirrels while hunting spring gobblers. I've been bombarded with comments and suggestions—including one from my neighboring officer, which was published as a Field Note. One person suggested I would probably call in a bunch of gobblers if I used a squirrel call.—WCO Daniel E. Marks, Williamsport.

## Pitchin' In

**CLEARFIELD COUNTY**—A special thanks goes out to the members of the Cooper Township and Mosquito Creek Sportsmen's Association for all the browse cutting they accomplished last winter. Over the years these sportsmen have demonstrated a sincere willingness to help wildlife, not just provide lip service.—WCO Donald L. Zimmerman, Drifting.

## More Good Work

Last February members of the Pennsylvania Deer Association pruned 35 apple trees on SGL 204. The quality of their work was outstanding, and I'm sure I and the area's wildlife will be appreciating the work for years to come.—LMO Dave Brown, Westfield.

## Unforgettable

**CENTRE COUNTY**—Several months ago there was a Field Note about two officers seeing 20 grouse in one spot. Well, not to do them one better, but when I was in high school, my friend John Zaldaris and I were bear hunting in Carbon County when we flushed two grouse. As we watched them fly off another flushed, then another, and then another. In all, 23 grouse flushed. I've been waiting ever since to run into a similar situation in grouse season.—WCO George Mock, Coburn.

## Easy Livin'

**ELK COUNTY**—Everybody up here is still talking about the mild winter we had and it must have seemed that way to wild animals, too. For the first time in my three years in this district I found no evidence of winter losses to deer and, again for the first time, I found yearling does carrying fawns. Even more amazing, however, was a pair of Canada geese with goslings I found in March, a month earlier than normal. Judging from these and other signs, this should be a banner fall for sportsmen.—WCO Dick Bodenhorn, Ridgway.



## Owner's Responsibility

**VENANGO COUNTY**—I've been receiving quite a few calls about house cats running wild. Most callers want me to trap and remove the destructive felines. I have to explain, however, that the Game Commission has no jurisdiction over cats because they are not wild animals. When I reply that it's the cat owners who are responsible, I'm normally told that the owner doesn't care about his pet. In the end, only pressure from neighbors will prevent many cat enthusiasts from letting their pets run wild, where they place a burden on wildlife and other people. If you have a neighbor who lets his cat run wild, tell him you don't approve of his thoughtlessness. It takes a concerted effort by everyone to alleviate this undesirable situation.—WCO Leonard Hribar, Seneca.



## Insomniac

**TIOGA COUNTY**—Last March, on two consecutive nights, I heard a ruffed grouse drumming between 10 o'clock and 10:30. That's new to me, and I wonder how many others have heard grouse drumming at night.—Franklin A. Bernstein, Middlebury Center.

## Volunteer Effort

**VENANGO COUNTY**—Did you know that our hunter/trapper education instructors, many of whom teach several 10-hour courses a year, receive no compensation for their efforts?—WCO Leo Yahner, Franklin.



## Use With Caution

**PERRY COUNTY**—My wife and her parents gave me a good bit of teasing when I modeled a pair of camouflage coveralls designed to look like tree bark, but my father-in-law did give me some good advice. "You look so much like a tree," he said, "that you better not stand still when any dogs are around."—WCO Jim Brown, Loysville.

## Long Way Down

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY**—Canada geese are known for nesting about anywhere—and in the district, everywhere—but I still was surprised to find a goose nesting on a ninth-floor balcony. We removed the eight eggs so the young wouldn't have such a long drop after hatching.—WCO William Wasserman, Montgomeryville.

## Stuck

**SOMERSET COUNTY**—Last winter Elaine Finui, Somerset, was passing by her window when she glanced outside at her bird feeder and a cardinal caught her eye. The bird was frantically flapping its wings, but wasn't going anywhere. Its tail feathers were frozen to a tree. When it became obvious the bird couldn't free itself, Elaine and her husband Chuck decided to intervene. As they opened their door, however, the bird made one final lunge and escaped, leaving only a few feathers behind.—WCO Daniel W. Jenkins, Somerset.

## The Record Speaks for Itself

**ARMSTRONG COUNTY**—I was expecting many negative comments when the agency proposed the statewide implementation of the bonus deer initiative, so I was pleasantly surprised at all the favorable comments I received at sportsmen's club meetings and at the Allegheny Sport Show. It seems more people are beginning to realize our deer management program is working well.—WCO Barry Seth, Worthington.

## Always Welcome

**BLAIR COUNTY**—Steve Shirk, Altoona, and his son Mark were getting ready for the opening of trout season when Mark asked where they were going. When Steve replied that they were going to Bob's Creek, which is on SGL 26, Mark asked, "Do you think Bob will mind?"—WCO Don Martin, Williamsburg.

## Through Thick and Thin

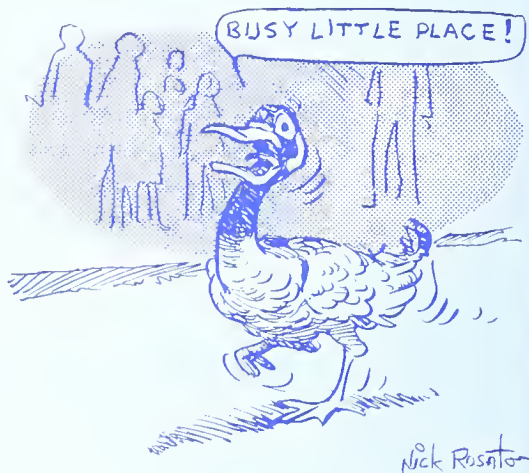
**ADAMS COUNTY**—Last spring I watched an elderly gentleman struggle through a field with an old horse-drawn plow. Only the plow was harnessed to a deer, a John Deere tractor, that is, and the gentleman's wife was behind the wheel. I guess a family that plows together stays together.—WCO Mike Dubaich, Aspers.

## Mystery Solved

**LYCOMING COUNTY**—On my answering machine was a message from a lady who had found a small object, with a coarse black hair on it, that she thought might have come from a transmitter on a bear. Following my advice, she contacted a deputy and arranged to give him the object. He didn't know what the object was, but he knew it wasn't a piece from a radio transmitter. Because it was found in a pasture I asked our land manager what it was. He quickly identified the item as being a type of thermometer farmers attach to cows to indicate when the animals should be bred.—WCO Dennis Dusza, Williamsport.

## Dedication

**WASHINGTON COUNTY**—I recently had the honor of presenting Deputy Wildlife Conservation Officer Michael F. Vosel, Jr. with his 25-Year Service Pin. Mike began his tenure with the agency in 1963 in Allegheny County. He's been serving the sportsmen of Washington County since 1965. I'd just like to again congratulate Mike, and I hope I'm around to present him with his 50-Year Service Pin.—WCO R. Matthew Hough, Washington.



## Misplaced

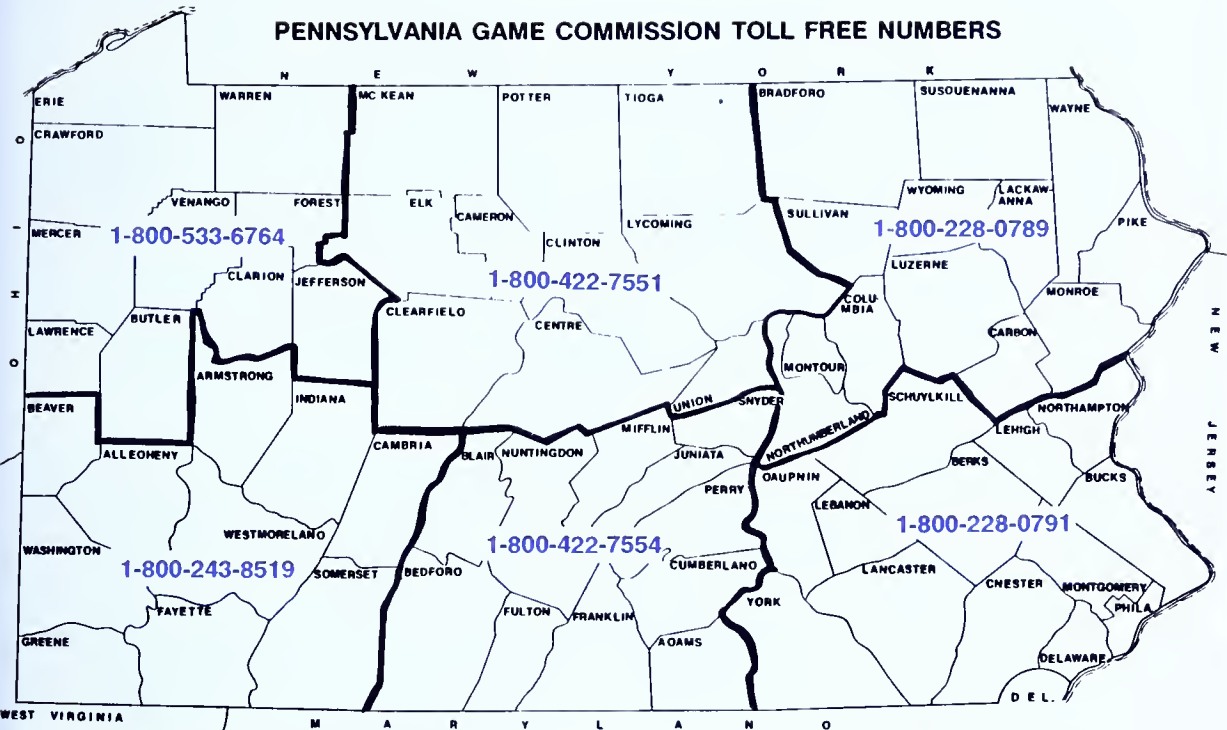
**FOREST COUNTY**—It was April 1 and I thought somebody was trying to fool me when I received a complaint about a Canada goose in downtown Marienville. Upon investigation, however, I found the stately bird strutting up the main street of town as if he owned the place. With help from a few town folks we were able to catch the bird, and I took him to Buzzard Swamp where, I hope, he started to behave like geese are supposed to.—WCO Al Pedder, Marienville.

## Where the Action Is

**LEHIGH COUNTY**—State Game Lands are used for many activities other than hunting and trapping, but I recently learned of a new use. Drew and Maggie Goss, Schnecksville, exchanged wedding vows on SGL 205.—WCO Tim Grenoble, Fogelsville.



# PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION TOLL FREE NUMBERS



USE THE toll free 800 numbers to contact the Pennsylvania Game Commission. The new communications network is designed to better serve the public and provide law enforcement officers with contacts at region offices during late night and early morning hours.

## Toll Free Numbers in Place

CALLING it a concerted effort to provide an even higher level of service to sportsmen and the public, the Pennsylvania Game Commission has established toll free telephone service in each of the agency's six regional field offices.

The new toll free telephone network is in response to a 1987 study in which the Commission confirmed that sportsmen, and others in the public sector,

want and need a better communications link with the Game Commission.

At the same time, the network will alleviate many of the problems formerly experienced by both the public and conservation officers when field personnel maintained business phones and automatic answering equipment in their private residences.

More importantly, the new communications network will ensure law enforcement officers will have radio contact with regional offices during late night and early morning hours, when they often work in potentially dangerous environments.

Conforming to policies that took effect June 8, regional field offices will be manned, with minor exceptions, from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days a week, from February 1 through September 30. From October 1 through January 31 — during the peak hunting and trapping seasons — regional offices will be staffed 24 hours a day.

Home telephone numbers of district



wildlife conservation officers will no longer be published. District officers may now be contacted by calling the Game Commission on the appropriate toll free lines. Numbers are printed in this year's Hunting and Trapping Digest, supplied with each hunting and furtaking license, and telephone company directories. The numbers are also

available from information operators by dialing 1-555-1212.

Callers should now direct all inquiries and complaints to the regional field office servicing the area where the caller resides. The accompanying map highlights Game Commission regions, the counties served by each, and their respective toll free 800 numbers.

## Archers Break Records Again

PENNSYLVANIA'S archers are beginning to make a habit of breaking deer harvest records—they did it again in 1987 for the third consecutive year. Bowbenders filed cards on 8950 white-tails last year, breaking the old figure of 8609 set in 1986. That mark shattered the previous record, 7467, established in 1985.

Game Commission studies show that only about half of all successful deer hunters file report cards. That would mean the actual archery harvest would be nearly 18,000.

"Archery license sales in 1987 were only slightly higher than the preceding year, so it's not completely accurate to say the increased harvest is due to more hunters being afield," Dale Sheffer, Wildlife Management Bureau Director, says. "There were 246,099 archery licenses sold in 1986, and although 1987 returns are not yet complete, we have recorded 254,770 archery license sales for last year.

"More than ten percent of all archery

hunters in the United States buy licenses in Pennsylvania," Sheffer points out. "Yet when archery license sales in this state peaked at 283,670 in 1983, archers reported taking only 6342 whitetails."

Last year flintlock hunters reported taking 5193 deer, a higher figure than the 3665 reported in 1986. Muzzleloader license sales totaled 79,182 in 1986, while incomplete returns for 1987 show 78,862 muzzleloader licenses sold.

The all-time muzzleloader harvest figure was 8246 in 1981, when hunters could have both muzzleloader and antlerless deer licenses. That year 145,144 muzzleloader licenses were sold.

Sheffer stresses that the key to deer populations is the number of antlerless deer present. "Of the whitetails taken by archers last year, 3530 were antlerless, while the muzzleloader antlerless harvest figure was 4846," he reports. He also indicates uncontrolled harvests of antlerless deer (those taken by archers and muzzleloaders) are a major problem in the Commission's overall deer management program.

Archers were most successful last year in Potter County, reporting 423 deer, followed by Berks, 401; Schuylkill, 304; Westmoreland, 275; and Tioga, 269. Flintlock harvest leaders were Schuylkill, 302; Venango, 241; Luzerne, 224; Somerset, 207; and Butler 180.

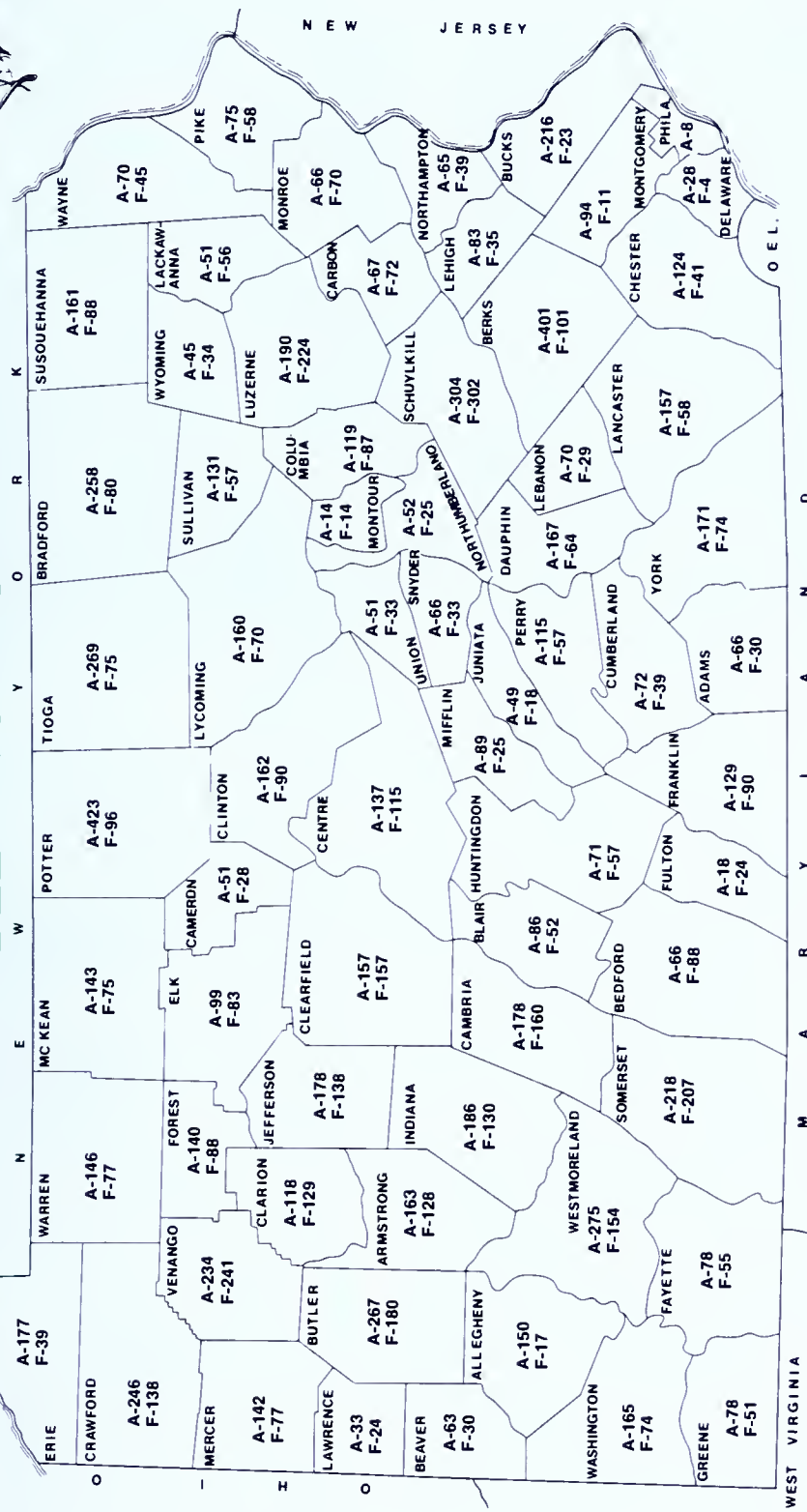
**CURTIS J. YOUNG, Beaver Falls, at 76 years of age, dropped this Jefferson County 4-point during last year's record breaking archery season.**







# 1987 REPORTED ARCHERY & FLINTLOCK DEER HARVEST



| ARCHERY        |       | FLINTLOCK    |  |
|----------------|-------|--------------|--|
| (Symbol - A)   |       | (Symbol - F) |  |
| ANTLERED       | 5,399 | 342          |  |
| ANTLERLESS     | 3,502 | 4,821        |  |
| COUNTY UNKNOWN | 49    | 30           |  |
| TOTAL          | 8,950 | 5,193        |  |

GRAND TOTAL ARCHERY HARVEST .... 8,950  
GRAND TOTAL FLINTLOCK HARVEST .. 5,193



## Goose Blind Applications

**A**PPPLICATIONS for hunting from goose blinds at the Pennsylvania Game Commission's two controlled hunting areas at Pymatuning and Middle Creek will be accepted from September 1 through September 20.

Hunters are permitted to apply to only one of the two areas. If a person applies to both areas, that person will not be eligible to hunt on either.

A hunter will be permitted only one hunting trip to a controlled goose shooting area. If a person hunts geese on one area, that person will not be eligible to return to that facility as a hunter this year, and that person will not be eligible to hunt on the other controlled goose shooting area in 1988.

Drawings will be held by the Game Commission at Pymatuning and Middle Creek in late September to select blind holders for both controlled shooting areas.

A reservation will entitle the applicant to bring up to three guests. The guests must be present to register.

At Middle Creek, there will be four shooting days each week of the season, on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Shooting at Pymatuning will also take place on four days, but on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays.

Applications for goose blinds at Middle Creek and Pymatuning are a part of the 1988-89 Hunting Digest supplied with the hunting license. To apply, a hunter simply fills out the application and then mails it to the management area of his or her choice.

The official application form printed in the Digest must be used.

Pymatuning applications must be submitted to the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Pymatuning Wildlife Management Area, RD 1, Hartstown, PA 16131, and Middle Creek applications to the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area, RD 1, Newmanstown, PA 17073.

The applicant's 1988-89 hunting



license number, including the letter, must be listed on the application. Applications must be received no earlier than September 1 but no later than September 20; if the application is received earlier than September 1 or later than September 20, the application will be rejected.

### **Not Transferable**

Only successful applicants, as determined in the drawings, will be notified. Reservations are not transferable.

The successful applicant whose name appears on the Pymatuning reservation must present the reservation in person at Pymatuning Wildlife Management Area headquarters (registration building) located on Legislative Route 20006 between Hartstown and Linesville about four miles north of Hartstown, and Middle Creek reservations must be presented at the Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area visitors center on Hopeland Road about two miles south of Kleinfeltersville.

Hunters should arrive at least one hour before shooting time to allow for the issuance of permits. All reservations for any one day will be valid only up to one-half hour before shooting time on the specified day.

A federal migratory bird hunting stamp (duck stamp) is required to hunt geese and ducks. 1988-89 hunting licenses and duck stamps must be presented at the check station.

Only one official application per person may be submitted. Anyone submitting more than one application for a reservation will have all applications rejected. Further, individuals filing more than one application or hunting more than one time per season on a controlled goose hunting area in the state will be denied the privilege of hunting on these areas for three years.

Provisions have been made at both Middle Creek and Pymatuning to accommodate handicapped persons.

Shooting hours for the controlled goose hunting area at Pymatuning are from one-half hour before sunrise until noon. On the Middle Creek controlled

area, shooting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise until 1:30 p.m. Hunting starts at 9 a.m. at Pymatuning on October 29. There is no hunting from goose blinds at Middle Creek on October 29, and December 26 and 27.

In addition to the goose hunting area, there are also two controlled duck shooting areas at Pymatuning. Fifty hunters can be accommodated at a time in each of these two areas.

Shooting days for the Pymatuning duck areas are also Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, and duck area shooting hours are the same as for the goose area. While these duck areas are controlled shooting sections, there are no advance reservations.

A drawing is held each morning to determine the 100 hunters who will qualify for that day. Those using the duck areas must check in at the registration building.

### **Three Duck Blinds**

This year there will be three duck shooting blinds at Middle Creek, with a drawing each shooting day to determine the winners of these blinds. A hunter may take a goose from a Middle Creek duck blind; however, a hunter is limited to one goose per year from the controlled shooting section at Middle Creek.

A hunter is also limited to one goose per year from the controlled goose hunting area at Pymatuning.

Ducks may be taken by hunters using the goose blinds at both Middle Creek and Pymatuning, within other existing federal and state regulations for waterfowl. Waterfowl hunters are required to use steel shot for all waterfowl hunting in Pennsylvania, including Middle Creek and Pymatuning.

Hunters are reminded that the 1988 waterfowl season will not be established until late August or early September, after the federal government draws up its framework. Waterfowlers are urged to wait until Pennsylvania seasons are announced before submitting their blind applications to Pymatuning or Middle Creek.

# Strictly Speaking

**“ALL YOU EVER** talk about is hunting!”

How many times have you heard that complaint? It may not be completely true, but a hunter's natural interest in the sport, and in wildlife, does have a way of leading conversations to his favorite topic.

We hunters may talk about the shooting sports and wild animals consciously, but even those who complain the loudest about our single-mindedness use terms, phrases and comparisons derived from outdoor lore. We and they may not realize it, but expressions concerning wildlife and hunting are deeply ingrained in the English language, from both Old Country beginnings and growth in America.

## Lock, Stock and Barrel

Some common sayings stem directly from the use of firearms. Buying something “lock, stock and barrel” is an example. This has come to mean we have purchased or accepted the whole thing, whether it is an article or an excuse. It originally meant acquiring an entire gun. The expression referred to the three parts, the “lock,” as in flintlock, the wooden “stock” and the forged metal “barrel.”

Even folks who have never heard of a muzzleloader use the term “flash in the pan” to describe an overnight sensation that quickly disappears without leaving a lasting impression. It originally referred to the muzzleloader's malady of

having the priming powder “flashing” in the “pan,” but failing to touch off the real business of the gun, the charge in the barrel. Along the same line we speak about “going off half-cocked,” only partly prepared or halfway in a temper. This comes from having a gun on “half cock,” the hammer set between the down, totally relaxed position and “fully cocked,” in which the flint is drawn the whole way back so the firearm is ready for firing.

We all have had our “sights set on” something or had a goal “in our sights.” Both phrases obviously originated from aiming a firearm. We say we are “primed and ready,” fully prepared, whether what we're after is an unlikely “long shot” or a “surefire” certainty, a “sure shot.”

Some people have a “hair-trigger” temper, one that can go off with the least provocation. Or a person may be “quick on the trigger,” a little hasty, and take off “quick as a shot,” which is fast indeed. We may compliment someone as being “right on target” with an idea and recommend he give it “both barrels,” that is, his all, as in both barrels of a shotgun, in getting the job done. Then, “sure as shootin'” a certain success. If it fails, then he'll just have to “bite the bullet.”

“Hitting the bullseye” has come to mean more than successfully poking holes in the center circle of a target. It now means “zeroing in” on the central idea or the heart of any topic or problem. Not as many expressions have come from archery, but we do talk of something as having flown “straight as” or “true as an arrow,” in the most direct line, and having “found its mark.” We still use “arrows” on the blackboard to point to the important words and to show direction along the roadway.

Wildlife and hunting are closely woven into our day to day speech, as well. Some common phrases go back many centuries to the Anglo-Saxons and

## Another View...

by Linda Steiner



IT'S NOT nice to be called "owl-eyed" because we wear glasses, but being "wise as an owl" is all right.



to the Norman French conquerors who loved to go "a-hunting." Did you know that the simple word "hello" has its origins in hunting? It's believed to have come out of the calls "hulloo" and "hal-loo" used by huntsmen to attract attention. It grew from the French "hola" or "ho-là," which literally means "Ho, there!"

"Stop beating around the bush," get to the point, came out of the European practice of having "beaters" drive the game out of the brush for the gunners to shoot. A driver who always "beat around the bush" instead of getting into the middle of it where the game was hiding, might risk a beating himself. The expression "one fell swoop" is from falconry, where the hawk makes a "fell" or fierce dive, swooping in on a small animal. "She stoops to conquer" also refers to a falcon, which "stoops" or plummets from a height to catch its prey.

If we "make tracks," we are said to go hurriedly, the idea being we leave our footprints behind in our haste. Being on the "wrong trail" or the "right track" also harkens back to the following of game sign. "Sniffing out" the answer has come to mean being persistent at discovering it, but the phrase still smacks of the job of the hunting dog. If we are "hounded," then we are pursued by something we

can't shake. But if we're "barking up the wrong tree," we're as mistaken as the dogs that are howling up one trunk, when the raccoon's out on a limb of another.

Many sayings use comparisons with animals in describing people. More than a few refer to birds. Calling someone "bird-brained" or "feather-brained" doesn't speak highly of our regard for them or for avian intelligence. "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush" means being satisfied with what you've got or what is a sure thing, rather than taking a chance on something that may seem better, but which is out of reach. It can hit home literally to a hunter who passes a certain shot to try for and miss a chancey double that jumps up from the brush.

### Nest Egg

We brag about our good fortune when we say we're "feathering our nest" and building up a "nest egg" against future wants. Someone who just "picks" is said to "eat like a bird," although the quickness at which my winter feeder is depleted puts the lie to that old saw. It's a compliment to be called "hawk-eyed" or "eagle-eyed" because we're keenly observant. But it's not nice to be called "owl-eyed" because we wear glasses.

## KILLING EAGLES IS UNLAWFUL!

Mature Bald Eagle



Immature Bald Eagle



Up To  
**\$4,000 REWARD**

for information  
leading to the CONVICTION of individuals who MOLEST,  
INJURE, or KILL BALD or GOLDEN EAGLES.  
Report violations to your LOCAL GAME PROTECTOR.

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service • Pennsylvania Game Commission • Pennsylvania Universities • U.S. Forest Service • National Wildlife Federation • Pennsylvania Wildlife Federation • Pennsylvania Federal Game & Fish Commission • U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service • Pennsylvania Forestry Association • Hawk Mountain Sanctuary • U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

However, being “wise as an owl” is all right.

Today, being called a “turkey” means about the same thing as being a “silly goose” once did. And while we’re naming names, how about “you old coot” and “crazy as a loon”? That is something to “grouse” or complain about. If we “talk turkey” we are said to discuss seriously, and if we are naturally adept, we hear we take to something “like a duck takes to water.”

Bears made enough of an impression on early American settlers that phrases about them are common. Some, however, imply a less than amiable disposition. We may be “grouchy as a bear” and advised “don’t be such a bear” to correct it. There is a bear market on Wall Street, and a big burly guy is said to be “a bear

of a man.” If we’ve got “a bear by the tail,” we’re in a tough spot, but if we’re “ready for” or “gunned for bear,” we’re well prepared for whatever happens.

There are two ways to get “skunked.” Literally, we can be the recipient of a full dose of a skunk’s malodorous weapon or, figuratively, we can come home empty-handed. Someone who is a “skunk” is a rotten enough person that he’s probably also a “weasel.” He’s so sly and misleading that, even if caught, he’ll try to “weasel out” of the responsibility. But if we fall for his “harebrained” scheme, it must be because we’re “blind as a bat.”

Not all expressions are so derogatory about animals’ less-admired qualities. Someone can be described as being as “fleet” or as “graceful as a deer.” A lovely ingenue may be “doe-eyed.” If we should hurry, we’re told be “quick like a bunny.” If we’re ambitious, we’re “busy as a beaver.” When we save against hard times, we’re said to “squirrel” something away, like a bushytail hoarding nuts for the winter. Foxes are perceived to be so shrewd, that both “dumb as” and “clever as a fox” mean the same thing. We can be “out-foxed,” beaten by someone who’s more calculating than we. Then there’s the “foxy-looking” gal, which implies someone with more “edge” than just beauty.

Undoubtedly, there are many more instances of wild animals and the outdoor life imbedded in our language. It’s fun to take note of them and I’m sure you’ll discover lots that I’ve missed. What is even more intriguing is the realization that, whether or not we practice the sport, we each think a little like a hunter, every day.

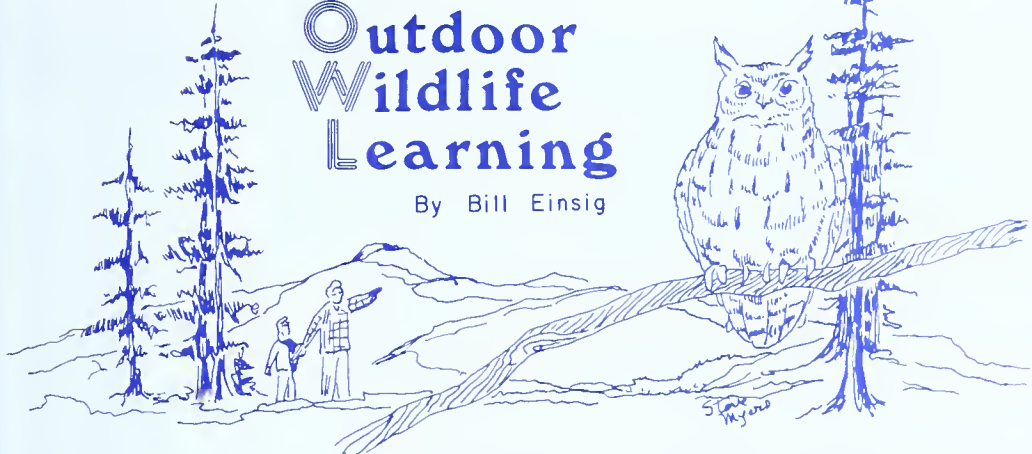
## Conservation Works

Petroleum predictions: 15 years ago it was predicted that the nation’s energy use would rise almost 20 percent by the late 1980s. Actually, however, as reported in *International Wildlife*, energy use in the United States has fallen. The effects of energy conservation are being felt worldwide as well, with savings totaling some \$250 billion a year.



# Outdoor Wildlife Learning

By Bill Einsig



## Teaching about the Bay

**D**O PENNSYLVANIANS have a role to play in the cleanup of the Chesapeake Bay? Consider first that the Susquehanna River, cutting through the heartland of our state from New York to Maryland, contributes about half of all the freshwater flowing into the Bay. Consider, too, that about 40 percent of the nitrates and 21 percent of the phosphates in the Bay were carried there by the mighty Susquehanna. Those nutrients cause the Bay's most tenacious problem—nutrient enrichment.

Three million Pennsylvanians live in the Chesapeake's drainage area. What they spray, pour, wash, drain and flush ultimately finds its way to the Bay. Unfortunately, what they spread on their croplands also finds its way to the Bay. Some attribute the excessive levels of fertilizer and manure spread on poorly managed cropland as the source of 85 percent of the nitrates and 60 percent of the phosphates in the Susquehanna River. Further, the average annual loss of soil and nutrients per farm has been valued at \$2000.

Yes, Pennsylvanians do have a crucial role to play in the Chesapeake cleanup—a job that promises to take years of effort. It will be important to educate both adults and youngsters to keep the Chesapeake from becoming Pennsylvania's forgotten sewer. Only responsible stewardship will restore and maintain the rich variety of life in and around the Chesapeake Bay.

Following are several lessons that illustrate the detrimental activities that are polluting the Chesapeake Bay.

### Here Today, Gone Tomorrow

In this lesson students will study the

sediments in a sample of stream water. Transparent containers are the only materials needed.

#### Procedure:

1. Fill a tall, slender glass container with muddy water collected from a local stream during or just after a rainshower.

2. Examine this water:

Is there anything on the bottom of the container? How well does light pass through the water and container? Can you see through the water? Can you read a newspaper or textbook through the container?

3. Allow the sediment to settle for several days.

Is there now anything on the bottom of the container? If so, how did it get there? Is the material arranged in layers? If so, why?

4. How did this sediment get into the stream? (Washed from soil areas.) Where is it going? (Downstream to the river and, ultimately, from where many of us live, to the Chesapeake Bay!) Could you estimate how much soil washes away each year in this stream? (Yes, if you estimate the volume of flow and the weight of lost soil per gallon.)

#### Extension:

1. Try drying this sample and weighing the remaining sediment. If you started with one gallon of muddy water, this weight will represent the sediment load per gallon of stream flow.

2. Compare the sediment load during and between rains. Help students understand the role of rainfall in the erosion of soil from unprotected areas.

3. Explore the watershed upstream

from your collecting point for the source(s) of the sediment. The source can often be traced to an uncultivated field, dirt road or construction site.

4. Ask students to monitor a stream of their choice, perhaps one near their home, and record the time required for their stream to turn muddy after the rain begins. Compare results. Why do some streams become muddy faster than others? Why do some streams clear faster than others?

### Too Much of a Good Thing

In this lesson students compare the effects of different nutrient levels on the growth of algae. Needed are three clear

16-ounce containers, glass or plastic, and one gallon of distilled/demineralized water.

#### Procedure:

1. Nearly fill three similar containers with equal amounts of distilled or demineralized water obtained from a high school chemistry lab or grocery store.

2. Label one jar, "Plain Water."

3. To another container add a water soluble fertilizer according to directions, in proportion to the amount of water in the jar. Label this "Fertilizer, Normal."

4. To the third jar, add ten times the amount of fertilizer added to the normal jar. Label this jar, "Fertilizer, Overload, x 10."

# SAVE THE BAY

That's been our cry since the beginning. Won't you help?

The Chesapeake Bay is in serious trouble. Toxic chemicals, poorly treated sewage, pesticides, and fertilizers are taking their toll. In many areas, fish, crabs, and oysters can no longer live because of a severe lack of oxygen in the water. We must take immediate action. We can't stand by and do nothing and expect the Bay to survive much longer.

You can help by becoming a member of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, a private non-profit organization that works to save the Bay through legal, scientific, educational, and land protection programs. As a member, you will receive bimonthly CBF publications, a SAVE THE BAY bumper sticker, and a 20% discount on all membership field trips.

You can make the difference; send your \$20.00 tax deductible contribution today to: Save The Bay, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, 412 North 2nd Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17101.





5. Add a half-cup of rich pond water to each jar. This inoculates each jar with pond organisms.

6. Loosely cap all jars to limit evaporation and place them in a well lighted area of the classroom. Avoid long periods of direct sunlight, however, to prevent heat buildup.

7. Examine the jars daily and/or weekly for a month.

Do the jars look the same? Can you describe any differences? What caused these differences? Which jar allows the most light to pass through? How did algae respond to nutrients?

### Extension:

1. Try this experiment using various kinds of water: pond, spring, tap, etc.

2. Try other nutrient concentrations. How much is too much?

3. Use a microscope to examine several drops from each jar. Which has more critters? More algae?

## The Soil Trap

In this lesson students experiment with the ability of soil to filter nutrients out of water. Needed are lawn fertilizer, a four-foot section of four-inch PVC pipe, and a support for the pipe.

### Procedure:

1. Set the pipe in a bucket on the pipe stand and fill it with soil to within six inches from the top. You'll need several buckets of soil to fill this pipe.

2. Mix one tablespoon of lawn fertilizer to one gallon of water. Also add enough blue food coloring to turn the water deep blue.

3. Pour the fertilizer water into the top of the pipe and allow it to drain (percolate) through the soil and into the catch bucket.

4. Test the water in the catch bucket for nitrogen and phosphorus if you have suitable test kits. If not, examine the blue coloring. If the dissolved blue coloring made it through the soil tube, the fertilizer probably did, too.

5. Questions:

Did the soil filter out all the nitrogen, phosphorous and blue coloring? (No. Dissolved nutrients will not be filtered by this soil.)

Did it filter out any of those nutrients? (The test is not accurate enough to meas-



ure the small amount that is held by soil particles. You can compare the blue color. Is it lighter than it was at the start of this experiment?)

If this were the soil in your yard, where would these nutrients go next? (They may move slowly through the soil into an aquifer below or be held by soil for the use of plants. However, they may also find their way into a stream and begin their journey to the Chesapeake Bay.)

Does this mean you should not fertilize your yard? (No. It means you should apply only as much fertilizer as you need and to be certain the fertilizer stays on your lawn to do the job you want it to do. After all, why pay for fertilizer that will runoff without benefiting you at all?)

Manure is a rich source of nutrients. Why is it a bad idea to let manure drain into nearby streams? (The nutrients in manure include the same nitrates and phosphates found in commercial fertilizer and will stimulate the excessive growth of aquatic plants that will eventually die and decay, causing a drop in oxygen and an increase in sediments that can smother food and eggs of bottom dwellers.)

## Discussion

The soil is a great filter. However, it can't filter all substances, especially those substances that dissolve to form solutions. Students should leave this activity with the concept that whatever we pour onto the soil (fertilizers, oil, pesticides, soapy water) could move through the soil layer and cause problems in nearby wells, streams, ponds—even the Chesapeake Bay.



**By Bill Bower**

**Wildlife Conservation Officer  
Bradford County**

Over the course of my 20-year career I've found illegal game hidden in many strange places, places most people would never expect to look. Looking back on these incidents now, they are humorous, if someone having illegal game can ever be humorous.

Well, let me relate a few incidents so you can decide for yourself.

Back in 1975 I was covering two districts because of a vacancy in the Towanda district. It was early Saturday morning; I had been out all night on jacklight patrol. Officers refer to night work as "jacklight patrol" because shooting deer at night is called "jacklighting." Back in early times men would light a limb from a jack pine tree, which burns bright and long, and use it to assist them in shooting at night. Hence, night shooting became known as "jacklighting."

But getting back to my story, I had just gotten home and crawled into a nice warm bed when the phone rang. The caller stated he had seen somebody pick up a deer and put it in a Volkswagen Bug with out-of-state license plates. He was calling from the Towanda district, so I had 24 miles to travel. When I finally got there, the streets were deserted in the early morning. I was in a hurry but, as luck would have it, I was held up by a red light. I had to stop. You know how it is when you're in

a hurry. I was complaining to myself about the Boro having the light working so early in the morning while sitting there waiting for the light to change. But then, all of a sudden, around the corner came a red Volkswagen. It had out-of-state plates on it, and it was the same color as the one I was looking for. I made a U-turn and pulled it over. There was only one occupant.

Walking up to the car, I said to the driver, "State Officer. Any guns or game?" The courts require all law enforcement officers upon stopping a vehicle to identify themselves and give their reason for stopping the vehicle. Through the years that statement has become almost second nature to me.

The driver, a man in his 20s said, "No, none here. What are you looking for, anyhow?"

"An illegal deer."

"Ha!" he said. "Where would I put a deer in this vehicle?" Remember it was a Volkswagen, a "Punchbuggy."

I said, "Well, how about opening the trunk anyway."

"Sure," the driver said. Getting out, he opened the trunk. "Do you think you could get a deer in here?" he asked.

As I shined my flashlight around the small compartment I thought of vehicles I had owned that had glove compartments almost as big. I didn't find any deer hair or blood though.

"Satisfied?" the driver asked.

"Yeah, I guess so." After awhile Game Protectors get a feel for violations, a sixth sense that tells us when we're on the right track. I had that feeling: this was the right vehicle, but there was no trace of evidence that a deer had been in that trunk. I examined the driver. Usually, if someone has handled a deer, he has a deer hair hanging on him somewhere. This guy was clean, maybe too clean.

"Well, if you're finished, I'd like to go," he remarked.

"Just a minute," I said. "I'd like to look inside the car."

"You're kidding! Who would put a deer inside a Volkswagen?"

The front seats were clean, but lying on the back seat was a blanket. I pulled the blanket aside and there it was—all the blood and hair I needed, even some freshly butchered venison. The driver then broke down and told me what had happened. He had been small game hunting that day with four buddies. One of



them shot a deer with a shotgun. They dragged it close to the road and hid it, then went back for it after dark. It wouldn't fit in the trunk, though, so they put it in the back seat. Well, he was a nonresident with no money, so I took him to jail.

The next day I rounded up his four hunting buddies. They ended up paying over \$1000 in fines and costs. For the longest time after that, every time I would see a "punchbuggy," I would chuckle and wonder how those guys ever got that deer in the back seat of one of those little cars.

Another strange thing occurred a few years back. The night before buck season found me, again, on jacklight patrol. About two o'clock in the morning I thought I had better go home and get some rest for the big day. I had just walked in the door when the phone rang. It was Charlie Fox, one of my deputies.

Charlie said he had just received a call that someone in a motor home had just shot a deer, loaded it, and was heading south on Route 14, toward Troy.

I was still dressed so I wasted no time getting out the door. Fox told me the caller had waited some time before calling him, so there was a chance the motor home had already gone through Troy. I started out of town and had just started up Route 14 when I passed a motor home coming south. Being the night—actually morn-

ing—before deer season, motor homes carrying hunters were a common sight. Could I be this lucky? Was this the motor home I was looking for? I had to check it out. I turned around and quickly caught up to the vehicle. We were in Troy by the time I turned on my red light and flicked my high beams. The motor home pulled into a lot beside a gas station that was now closed. I got out of my vehicle, walked up to the driver, and said, "State Officer. Any guns or game?"

The driver opened his window, but I couldn't see much because the motor home was so high. I said, "Actually, I'm looking for an illegal deer. I just got a report of somebody in a motor home answering this description just shot and picked up a deer."

"It wasn't us, officer," came a reply.

"Then you won't mind if I have a look inside."

"No, sure, that's okay. The door's on the other side. I'll open it for you."

I walked around to the other side and waited. It wasn't being opened and I could hear a lot of commotion coming from inside. I hammered on the door, "Come on, open up!"

"Just a minute, sir."

The door finally opened. As I went up the steps I knew I had the right motor home; there was deer hair and fresh blood

## **GAMEcooking Tips**

### **Stuffed Duck with Spicy Fruit Dressing**

Before preparing ducks, take into account the appetites of the people you are feeding. A whole duck looks like a lot of food, and it's hard to realize how little meat one actually yields. Everytime I prepare duck, I always think I've made too much, yet the platters always return to the kitchen without a scrap of meat left. Just to be safe, allow one whole duck for each hearty eater.

#### **Stuffing**

- 3 cups toasted bread cubes
- rind of 1 orange, grated
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon rind
- ½ cup cubed orange sections
- 3 cups diced apple
- 3 tablespoons chopped onion

- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- pepper to taste
- juice of one orange for basting

#### **2 ducks**

Combine all stuffing ingredients, and fill body cavity of cleaned ducks. Fill loosely; do not pack. This amount is enough for two small ducks or 1 four-pound duck. Roast in 350 degree oven for two hours, basting with orange juice. Increase heat to 425 degrees for 20 minutes longer or until leg moves easily and juices run clear. Serves 2.

—FROM WILD GAME COOKERY  
BY CAROL VANCE WARY

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## GAME NEWS

For a Friend . . .

on the steps. Inside, I saw three men seemingly sleeping in bunks, the driver, who had opened the door, and another man sitting in the front passenger seat.

I questioned the driver but, of course, he didn't know anything about any deer. I said to the men in the bunks, "Come on, time to get up."

They went through some feeble motions as if they were just waking up.

One stretched and yawned and asked, "Is it time to go hunting yet?"

I said, "I think you guys already have."

They were all dressed, even had their shoes on. I asked if they always slept with their shoes and clothes on. There were six of us inside that mobile home. It was, to say the least, crowded.

I started looking for the deer. I looked under bunks, under tables, in closets. I had no idea there were so many compartments in a motor home and yet I still couldn't find the deer.

Had I not seen the blood and hair on the steps I would have thought I had the wrong vehicle. But there was one last place. "What's this door?"

"The bathroom."

"I want to look inside."

"In the bathroom? Nobody would put a deer in a bathroom!"

"Sure, O.K."

"Well," he said, "you'll have to step back."

I stepped back and he opened the bathroom door. The only thing was that I was behind the door and couldn't see in. I tried to stick my head around the door, but he quickly closed it.

"There," he said, "are you satisfied?"

"Not quite," I said. "Step back, please."

When he stepped back I opened the door. There, sitting on the john, was the deer—a nice buck. It was leaning against the wall, quite dead. I thought of making some kind of joke, but didn't.

I issued the five men citations and confiscated the firearm that had been used in the killing. It cost them over \$1000 in fines and costs.

Charlie Fox arrived before I finished filling out the citations. When I finished we went to the Troy Restaurant for coffee. It was already filling up with hunters who were anxious to start the season. I said to Charlie, "I'd better get home or I'll be late for work!"

Every wildlife officer has these types of stories. I've found illegal deer meat in a load of dirty wash, in an old wrecked car, under the bed of a supposedly sick woman, and once from the dog house of a very mean dog. When I approach a suspect and announce, "State Officer. Any guns or game?", I'm never quite sure where I may find it. But one thing for sure, I'm going to look in all the unusual places.

### Second Keystone Deer Classic

The Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs is hosting their second Keystone Deer Classic, from Friday, September 9 through Sunday, September 11, at the Valley Forge Convention Center. Kelly Cooper, of Kelly Kallers fame, and NRA consultant Bill Bynum will present seminars on the rattling technique, the use of deer lures and mock scrapes, and many other facets of deer hunting. Mike Ondik, Pennsylvania's "Mr. Whitetail," and Ted Godshall, representing the Game Commission, will present programs on deer biology and management. The trophy buck contest, in which nine awards will be given, and displays by nearly 100 outdoor equipment manufacturers and dealers will, like last year, be Classic highlights. Proceeds from the event will be used by the Federation to enhance natural resource conservation and hunting in the state.



# Thornapples



Chuck Fergus

**I**F YOU HAD to be a wild animal, what would you be? I think everyone asks himself that question sooner or later. I asked my mother. "A beagle," she said. "No, what *wild* animal?" She thought a while longer, "A deer." My wife said she'd prefer to be a fox. My best friend said a hawk—his father, he recalled, had once mentioned that he would like to be a squirrel. I pointed out to my friend that as a hawk, he might end up committing patricide. My friend smiled and shrugged.

Certainly it's easier to say what one would *not* want to be. I, for one, would not want to be a rotifer. I can't conceive of what an earless, eyeless rotifer's world is like, and in any case, the time of residence in that realm would be bitterly short.

I wouldn't want to be a 17-year cicada. It would be boring, under the soil for 17 years, sucking on the roots of trees; only to emerge, finally, into the stunning light and fly, *bing*, into a street sign, to be run over by a car or eaten by a cat. I would rather be a June bug than a cicada, but not by much.

If I had to be an insect, I'd choose a dragonfly. Not only does the thing have dashing vernacular names (snake doctor, Devil's darning needle), it is also a superb flier—it can stop on a dime, fly backward, side-slip, go like a streak. It lives underwater for the first part of its life, preying on other bugs. Then it

climbs up a stalk and sheds both its skin and its watery existence, and takes off swimming through the air. It would be fun, being a dragonfly; with a tail that looks like a four-inch stinger, I could scare people out of their wits.

There is a delightful sequence in T. H. White's *The Once and Future King* where a young boy Wart (who later becomes King Arthur) is changed by Merlyn the magician into a series of beasts. First he is a fish in the castle moat: a perch. "The Wart's legs had fused together into his backbone and his feet and toes had become a tail fin. . . . His head faced over his shoulder, so that when he bent in the middle his toes were moving towards his ear instead of towards his forehead. He was a beautiful olive-green color with rather scratchy plate-armor all over him, and dark bands down his sides." The Wart, as perch, marvels at the way the world has changed. "For one thing, the heaven or sky above him was now a perfect circle poised a few inches above his head . . . In order to imagine yourself into the Wart's position, you will have to picture a round horizon . . . instead of the flat horizon which you have usually seen. Under this horizon of air you will have to imagine another horizon of under water, spherical and practically upside down—for the surface of the water



acted partly as a mirror to what was below it. . . . Everything which human beings would consider to be above the water level was fringed with all the colors of the spectrum. For instance, if you had happened to be fishing for the Wart, he would have seen you, at the rim of the tea saucer which was the upper air to him, not as one person waving a fishing-rod, but as seven people, whose outlines were red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet . . .”

In the water the Wart is almost slaughtered by a pike before being safely delivered back unto his own form on dry land. Later he becomes, among other things, a falcon, a snake, a badger, and an owl. All to learn about life: as Merlyn puts it, “Learn why the world wags and what wags it.”

### Peregrine

Myself, I would rather be a peregrine falcon than a perch. It would be something to flap my arms and watch the treetops go hurtling past, or to tuck in those feathered appendages and see the earth rush dizzily up. To be able to observe ducks eating duckweed from a mile or so distant. And to clout with my fisted knobby feet some other skillful flier such as a pigeon or a duck, and then catch it as it fell. It would also be okay to be a raven. Having watched ravens, I am sure they are quite smart, and have the most fun of all birds. Flying, they flop over onto their backs and go gliding along, slowly being sucked down by gravity, ronking merrily. They dog-fight elaborately with their friends. Playing, they come tumbling out of the sky like black bath towels flung down the stairs.

A Canada goose wouldn't be bad. I would carry inside my skull little bits of magnetic material that would help me navigate—direct me to the precise puddle on the tundra where I nested the previous year, and, at the other end of the continent, the sheltered marsh where I wintered, dining on cordgrass and cattail bulbs. I might also possess a special kind of hearing enabling me to detect, while leading a vee of my fel-

lows, the boom and hiss of the Pacific Ocean off one wingtip, the Atlantic off the other.

What about a nuthatch? Nuthatches can do many dextrous things, including walking upside down on tree limbs. I could do worse than a nuthatch. I could be a vulture, for instance. Although if I can undertake the flight of fancy necessary to imagine myself a beast, perhaps I can presume that I might derive satisfaction, even pleasure, from its mode of living. So it might not be all that bad, to stick my head between the ribs of a putrefying deer, and make a meal. If I were a vulture I wouldn't have any hair to get mussed up. I'd have clever nictitating membranes to protect my eyes. And three-week-old deer meat might taste quite good, like the tenderest veal or an especially delicate vichyssoise.

Bless me, but I wouldn't want to be a toad. Pleasant it might be to fill the vernal night with trilling, but there are snakes. I once watched a snake eat a toad. Quick as a blink the snake struck—it didn't get much of a grip, only snagged a hind leg, but that was enough. The eating took the better part of an hour. The snake, which was a hognose





snake, kept edging its mouth forward, accommodating more and more of the toad. The serpent's head expanded frightfully, so that I thought it must burst; the scales on its cheeks stood distinct on the stretching skin, the jaw seemed to come unhinged. The toad sat staring, never changing expression—incapable of changing expression. It didn't struggle, just pawed at the snake with a forefoot, like an adult person will push away a bothersome child. After a while the snake's jaws finally met, the toad's forefeet sticking out between. So much for being a toad.

I would not be an ant. As with T.H. White's ants, life would be too regimented. No doubt there would be signs up everywhere, like the one in the high school gym: NO LOAFING. IF YOU STOP TO READ THIS YOU ARE LOAFING. Though as an ant I could lift 50 times my own weight. And pick up all kinds of information through my antennae. However, there would probably be a sort of squawk box inside my head through which muzak would incessantly play, except when interrupted by announcements: "Ant 278 42 4982 report to nursery 16, aisle 21." There to

haul eggs from one aisle to the next, or feed grubs, or remove the dead. Every now and then I might be let out to tend a herd of aphids. Occasionally a pismire from another hill, with a wrong smell on its body, would blunder into the nest, and be set upon and snipped into bits. If I resisted the muzak and whistled a few bars of "Home on the Range," I would probably be forced to do push-ups and get back to work.

### Said and Done

When all is said and done, I would rather be one of the so-called higher creatures; a mammal, if you please. Perhaps a fox. I would be out on God's green earth. I'd catnap half the day, curled into a ball and with my bushy tail comforting my nose. I would hunt at night, pouncing on mice and voles; occasionally I would dine on pheasant. I would avoid henhouses and traps and thus lead a long and salubrious life. The winters would be tough, the stomach knotted, the ears smarting with cold. And the fleas—I've heard that foxes are the most flea-ridden of beasts. You can bet I'd do something about it. Every day or two I'd take a chip of wood in my





mouth and then back ever so slowly into a stream, so the fleas would be forced to retreat from the encroaching water, running through my fur, up my back and neck, over my head and down my nose and onto the chip of wood. When I was underwater, with only my nose and mouth sticking out and all of those miserable pests rafted on the chip, I'd laugh.

Actually, if I had to choose an animal, it would be a bear. I would have the power to demolish a rotten stump with a

single blow. I would smell a vast spectrum of scents, dine on a tremendous range of foods. If I got tired of the scenery, or just took a notion to ramble, I would lope across a mountain range or swim a river or so. I would obey no schedule except that of the seasons. I would, of course, slumber away the winter, snug in a den or ensconced in a thicket with the snow mounding on my coat. It would be elementally pleasant, like sleeping late when rain drums the roof. I would have the privilege of learning what a bear dreams.

In truth, I'm happy to be a man. I might not have the bear's acute sniffer, but I've a pretty fair one that rewards me with flowers and fresh fall days. My eyes are sharp enough to detect the foreleg of a deer in a stand of saplings. I can hear the songs of birds, and breezes sighing through the pines. And I have a mind. I can imagine myself inside the skins of my fellow creatures, and come out again with a sense of why the world wags and what wags it.

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**THE PENNSYLVANIA Game Commission recently recognized the following employees for their outstanding accomplishments over the past year: John Sickenberger, Southwest Region Law Enforcement Supervisor; Doug Killough, WCO, Montgomery County; Daniel J. Konsavage, Food and Cover Corps member, Southeast Region; Gay Sterner, Bureau of Law Enforcement, Harrisburg; and Marlin Newman, Labor Foreman, Southcentral Region. Each was presented a 1988 Working Together for Wildlife fine art print in recognition of their exemplary services to the agency.**







Leonard Lee Rue

**WOODCHUCKS** are an ideal quarry for preseason warm-ups. Their size is nearly the same as the kill zone on a big game animal standing broadside and, among other reasons, they're relatively easy to find.

**Tune up for deer hunting with . . .**

## *Surrogate Shooting*

**By Keith C. Schuyler**

**I**F YOU'VE never missed a deer with the bow and arrow, perhaps this column isn't for you. Unless, of course, the upcoming season will be your first chance to miss, or you have yet to experience the thrill of drawing down on a whitetail.

We all enjoy pounding paper targets for practice, and many of us participate in local tournaments, either indoors, outdoors, or both. And after a time we get lulled into thinking that any creature as large as a deer that offers a shot at the distances we have become accustomed to is in the freezer.

As we pick up a little hunting knowledge, however, we become aware that it is necessary to practice with broadheads attached to our arrows. Broadheads seldom fly the same as target or

field points, even ones with identical weights. Therefore, practice with broadheads is imperative for success afield.

But there's more.

### **At That Instant**

There is an element in hunting that you rarely read about, and no one can really explain it to you. It's your individual reaction to leveling on a living creature, your quarry of the moment. At that instant, mixed up sentiment may cause hesitation, lack of the familiar bullseye can cause disorientation in aiming, adrenaline may cloud your vision or affect your muscles, and the pounding of your heart might make you wonder if your medical insurance is paid up. In that critical moment, you may forget



**WOODCHUCKS** spend considerable time near the entrances to their burrows. Consequently, it takes an accurate and powerful arrow to keep a chuck from making a quick retreat underground.

size of the kill zone on a big game animal standing broadside. If you can score with any consistency on woodchucks your accuracy is certainly adequate for deer.

Anyone who has hunted *Marmota monax*, the eastern relative of the ground squirrel, is familiar with the woodchuck's natural wariness. In areas where it is hunted hard, its instinct for self preservation is honed to a fine edge. When feeding, it will frequently sit upright to survey its surroundings for any sign of danger. When eating an apple, one of its favorite foods, it will sit erect and deftly roll the fruit in its front paws while keeping both eyes open for trouble.

Consequently, the archer, who must approach or be stationed relatively close, must employ the same stealth required for big game hunting. Some camouflage is in order, but a fluorescent orange hat is required, just as it is for the gun-toting chuck hunters.

When it comes to ammunition, no less than the identical broadheads used to hunt deer will serve to bring down this clover clipper. Even then, it takes a hit in the vitals to drop an animal before it can reach its burrow, with your expensive head and shaft. There is probably no animal, pound for pound, that is tougher than a determined old chuck.

That toughness takes on special significance when it's considered that woodchucks spend considerable time sitting or reclining right at the entrances to their burrows. It takes an accurate and relatively powerful arrow to keep a woodchuck from making a quick retreat underground.

In addition to the other needs for calm deliberate action, the necessity to make a good hit on a relatively small target rounds out all the ingredients of a most challenging sport.

Finding woodchucks is not much of a

everything you ever learned about shooting the bow and arrow—and blow the whole deal!

There is no sure cure for any of those or other imponderables that may cause you to suddenly unlearn everything that brought you to your moment of truth. We can't practice on deer or bear before the season, but there is a surrogate quarry that can test the individual archer's reaction to a real enough hunting situation—woodchuck; groundhog, if you prefer.

### Throughout the Summer

Because late spring offers the best hunting for this creature we are sometimes inclined to write it off in later months. Actually, there can be excellent hunting throughout the summer, and the chuck, for a number of reasons, is an ideal quarry for deer season warm-ups.

Foremost is its size. Although the rare woodchuck may weigh nearly 20 pounds, the average is probably under 10. Sitting upright on its haunches, a typical chuck is about 14 inches high and five inches wide. That's close to the



problem anywhere in Pennsylvania. The woodchuck received its name from its habit of living in woodland areas at the coming of the white man. But even this origination is a bit degrading as *chuck* hides the fact that this word came from early English, meaning "little pig." The name *groundhog* outright demeans one of the cleanest animals on the hunting scene. French-Canadians had a name for it, *siffleur*, meaning "whistler," because of the alarm whistle, heard chiefly in spring to warn the little chucks of danger.

As land was cleared of trees and stones, the latter were piled as fences to contain cattle and mark boundaries. Those nearly impregnable fortifications provided ideal places for woodchucks to dig their burrows. In addition, crops planted by the landowners provided convenient nutritious meals for animals accustomed to foraging over considerably more and dangerous territory to sustain their caloric intake. As stone fences disappeared, chucks continued their habit of burrowing near, and actually in, planted fields, especially hay

fields. A few, however, may still be found in woodlands far from farms. Because the woodchuck is a true hibernator, it must feed heavily to build up fat on which to live during the winter sleep. This works to the advantage of bow hunters because heavy feeding continues until first frost.

### Permission

In seeking permission for places to hunt, archers have one advantage. The limited range of bows, coupled with their quiet action, may make areas available to them that might not be appropriate for those who prefer a gun. Also, woodchucks frequently burrow near gardens and around buildings that would normally be off limits to any hunting. In most instances, the landowner will be delighted to have you re-



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move frequently bothersome animals. Just be certain that there is a perfect understanding between you and the landowner if you are hunting in a normally prohibited safety zone.

### Persistent

Woodchucks can be persistent. It's not unusual to find holes where they have set up housekeeping in spots close to residences without revealing their presence. Although I don't normally discourage them from digging burrows, which are useful to other animals at times, I don't tolerate them under and around outbuildings and close to the house. It has become necessary to remove those in self defense, for they do multiply rapidly, and can cause significant damage.

**MOST landowners are glad to grant archers permission to hunt woodchucks. Just be sure there is a perfect understanding of where you may and may not be allowed to hunt.**

Although fresh earth at the mouth of a burrow is a sure sign of occupancy in the spring, in the later months it is sometimes difficult to determine which holes are being used. Some scouting can be helpful if you plan to wait out chucks at their places of residence. In any event, the best times for hunting are generally when shadows are long, morning and evening. That's not to say you cannot get action all day if the weather is calm, but wind that covers normal sounds will make the quarry extra cautious or seldom seen. After a rain, or several days of bad weather, you can be almost certain of action.

If you have ever tried eating a woodchuck you know the fine tender flesh of younger animals offers great compensation for your hunting efforts. Woodchucks, because of their sometimes destructive habits and proliferation, are considered largely expendable. There is no daily or season limit on them. The only restrictions during normal hunting days are during the regular antlered and antlerless deer seasons and spring turkey hours. Nevertheless, unwanted carcasses should be disposed of in a manner that they will not be offensive to anyone.

But, there are only two months remaining to condition yourself by hunting woodchucks before the October archery deer season. See you in the pasture fields.

## Big Bird

The first fossil of what scientists believe to be the biggest seabird ever discovered has been unearthed on the Atlantic coast. According to *National Wildlife* magazine, the fossil was encased in a 30-million-year-old block of stone excavated in Charleston, South Carolina. Early speculation is that this enormous bird is a distant relative of today's pelican. Scientists believe the bird weighed 90 pounds and had a wingspan of almost 18 feet.





**RELOADING** is for any shooter, male or female, who is careful and conscientious. The important part of handloading is not what you do but how you do it.

## Handloading Ingredients

**By Don Lewis**

**Photos by Helen Lewis**

**“WHAT DOES** it take to become a good handloader?” was a question tossed in my direction at a shooting seminar. “I’ve talked with several handloaders, but I’ve gotten conflicting advice. Some say it’s easy, others say just the opposite. From your position as a gunwriter who covers all aspects of shooting, what do you think?”

I won’t delve into the rest of the conversation, but I did assure him that reloading is for any shooter, male or female, who is careful and conscientious. I don’t want to make it sound as easy as falling off the proverbial log but, in truth, reloading an empty rifle cartridge case is merely a matter of replacing the

components. Of course it’s not that simple, but in the end, that’s what’s accomplished.

The important part of handloading is not what you do but how you do it. Inserting a primer, pouring in the powder and seating the bullet can be done by anybody. In fact, some of the sophisticated reloading presses and other specialized equipment does much of that automatically. The answer to handloading proficiency is not found in the equipment used but in the person using it—which is true with all hobbies and skills. I have a very fine 12-tooth hand-saw, but that doesn’t guarantee I will make a straight square cut.





Other primers are made specifically for magnum rifle cartridges. They contain greater amounts of the explosive mix and give a longer burning and hotter flame than conventional rifle primers. They're necessary because the ball and extruded powders used in large capacity (magnum) cases are more difficult to ignite. The priming mix in the magnum primer may also differ slightly from that in a conventional primer.

### Original Boxes

Your hands should be clean and dry when handling primers. Also, primers should be kept in their original boxes, which have partitions to keep the primers separate. Primers should not be kept loose.

Many novice handloaders are afraid of misfires. That nemesis, however, can be avoided by making certain the primer is seated firmly on the bottom of the primer pocket. Having metal to brass contact there is the best reason I know for periodically cleaning the burned residue from the primer pockets.

The primer, when properly seated, will be slightly below the level of the case head. Such positioning may cause a slight flattening of the primer and compression of the explosive mix, but it's imperative to have the anvil legs firmly against the bottom of the primer pocket. If the legs are not touching, the primer can move away from the firing pin, much like a boxer, who pulls his head back when hit, rides with the blow. A misfire is almost inevitable in such a case. It's also known that a poorly set primer requires about 50 percent more firing pin energy to detonate, and most firing pin setups don't have that much extra strength. Cleaning the primer pocket, checking for oversize flash-



**THE LAST** basic operation is installing the bullet. The key is to be sure the bullet is seated to the right depth and that it's concentric with the case.

holes, and seating primers properly are more important than formerly thought.

The powder comes next, and it is the most mystifying of all cartridge ingredients. We know that black powder was the main propellant for almost 600 years before the advent of smokeless powder. Black powder has a couple of drawbacks. One is smoke. Getting off the second shot at a grouse or rabbit wasn't too easy when a cloud of smoke obscured the hunter's eyes. Another drawback is that black powder could possibly detonate from shock or a sudden jar. That's not true of smokeless powder.

During the latter half of the 19th century, smokeless powder began to replace the charcoal, sulfur and saltpeter mix. The discovery of guncotton in the mid-1800s had opened the door for a better propellant. In its early stages nitrocellulose (some still call it guncotton) burned too quickly for use in small arms, but when a method was discovered of regulating the combustion of nitrocellulose, the picture began to



brighten. It took the invention of celluloid, an early type plastic, which made an impermeable solid when combined with nitrocellulose, that solved the burning rate problem. It was learned that nitrated cellulose fibers could be colloided into a gelatinous substance with a mixture of ether and alcohol. The mixture, when dried, could be rolled into thin sheets and cut into flakes. When the solvents evaporated, the dried flakes burned only on the surface, and at a much slower rate.

### Single Base/Double Base

Straight nitrocellulose powder is called "single base." Powders with appreciable amounts of nitroglycerin are called "double base." Double base powders develop more energy per unit weight.

The manufacture of smokeless powder is interesting, but requires more space than I have here to describe. More important, to the handloader at least, would be some discussion on the burning rates of various powders and how the right powder for a certain cartridge can be selected.

Basically, there are three types of powder: tubular, ball, and flake. Tubular, or extruded, is most commonly used in rifle cartridges, and it is normally single base. Its burning rate is controlled by grain diameter, web thickness and the type of deterrent coating used. Coating

might be considered a form of fireproofing as it slows the powder combustion rate. Tubular powder can vary in grain size and appearance.

Some ball powders are spherical—usually of varying sizes—but ball powder can also be flat or disc shape. Ball powders, because they contain nitroglycerin, are double base.

Flake powder is normally a fast-burning powder, used in pistols and shotguns. Flake powders are not available in America for rifles, but they have been used in Europe.

In general, burning rates are controlled by grain size and deterrent coating. A final coating of graphite is applied to powder to reduce static electricity and to aid its flow through a powder measure.

Before getting into burning rates, a word of caution is in order about storing powder. Powder should be stored in a cool dark dry place. Manufacturers claim powder life is quite long when it is kept cool. However, they advise examining each can annually, and if there is any sign of rust-colored dust or a strong acid odor, the powder should be destroyed. I normally scatter small amounts over some secluded area.

Space won't permit covering all powders—scores of them are available—but a quick look will show that Hercules Bullseye is the fastest burning American powder. It's good for 38 Special loads,

PENNSYLVANIA'S 1988 Waterfowl Management Stamp is available at Game Commission offices and participating hunting license issuing agents. The voluntary stamps cost \$5.50 each, \$22 for a plate block of four, and \$55 for a full sheet of ten.





LEWIS, shown here checking cartridge length, seats bullets for varmint hunting so they almost touch the rifling, which reduces bullet jump and improves accuracy. Such a practice, however, is not recommended for big game hunting.

and Hercules has now developed some light 12-gauge shotgun loads for this powder.

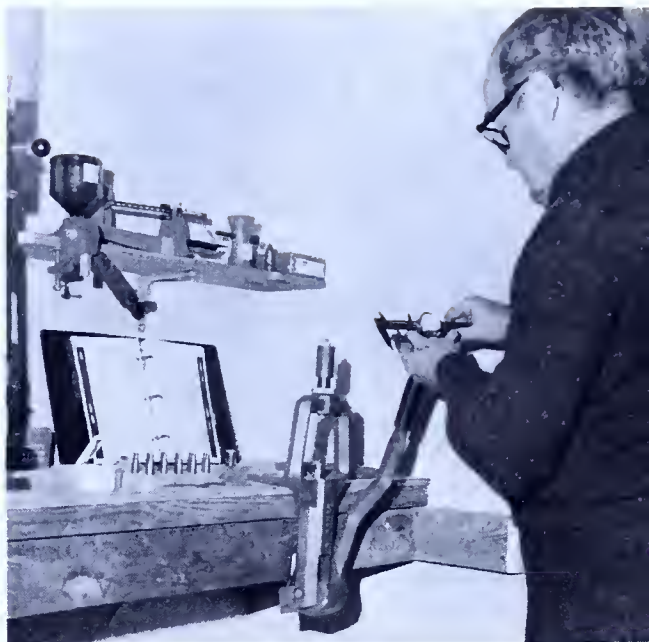
DuPont's 4227 is the fastest burning of their IMR series of powders. (Actually, the DuPont smokeless powder business was sold to IMR Powder Co., an affiliate of a Canadian chemical company, in 1986. Handloaders are so used to the DuPont name that it's hard to think in other terms, although the Canadian business manufactured all of the DuPont powders since 1978.) At any rate, 4227 works very well in the Hornet and Bee and with some light bullets in the 222. Hodgdon says their H4227—which is much like the IMR powder—reduces leading with cast bullets in the 357 and 44 Magnum handguns.

### Many Pounds

I have used many pounds of 4198 for the 222 Remington, and later with the 223 Remington. Several loading buffs claim 4198 is a good powder for reduced loads with lead bullets in medium-capacity cases. I have also used a lot of H322, which is a favorite with many benchrest fans, and Hercules Reloder 7.

Post WW II handloaders will never forget 4895. It is one of the most versatile powders on the market. I used several hundred pounds of 4895 when it was available as an ex-military bulk powder, and probably another 50 pounds after DuPont offered it in one-pound cans.

Another surplus powder—some say it was the most popular one to ever hit the shooting fraternity—was 4831. Its slow burning characteristic made it a top choice for heavy bullets in large capacity cases. About 15 years ago DuPont offered it as a regular canister powder, and so did Hodgdon in their H-series. But it should be noted that these powders, though having the same number,



are not identical, so loading data are not fully interchangeable.

The last basic handloading operation is installing the bullet. The key here is to be sure the bullet is seated to the right depth and that it's concentric with the case. I prefer a benchrest seating die for my varmint and benchrest loads because it gives better bullet alignment. For varmint hunting, where I always single load the rifle, I seat the bullet so it almost touches the rifling. This reduces bullet jump and improves accuracy. Sometimes this results in a cartridge that is too long to fit into the magazine, which makes this an impractical approach for a big game hunting situation.

The balanced bullet has been a major contribution to accuracy. Primers and powders are more uniform than formerly, reloading equipment is more sophisticated, and barrel making has reached new heights. No one can deny that these improvements have helped reduce group size. But, looking at it logically, it's obvious that the bullet has to be perfect to travel hundreds of yards on a true flight. Not only should the first bullet do this, but the second, third, and so on. An off-balance bullet, or one with internal defects just can't fly a true course.

# *In the wind*

bob mitchell



A record 36.6 billion aluminum cans, amounting to 1.3 billion pounds of aluminum, were recycled in America last year. That represents a 50.5 percent recycling rate and, as reported by the Aluminum Association, resulted in earnings of more than \$250 million for can collectors. In addition to reducing solid wastes, the recycling saved over 10 billion kilowatt hours of electricity, enough to satisfy the residential needs of New York City for more than six months.

**Mandatory hunter education requirements take effect this year in Virginia, Montana, Texas and Oklahoma. With these additions, only 11 states remain that don't have some sort of hunter safety requirement. In 1949 New York became the first state to make hunter education mandatory; several states began offering it on a voluntary basis in 1945.**

According to the National Wildlife Federation, based on the "1988 State of the World" by the Worldwatch Institute, \$150 billion a year would be necessary to restore a healthy global environment. Objectives needed to be accomplished include reforestation, halting and reversing soil erosion, family planning and other population control measures, developing new energy sources, and dealing with Third World debts. As for where the money might come, the Institute points out that the total represents only 17 percent of the \$900 billion spent annually for military purposes.

According to the Wildlife Management Institute, an exchange of public land for private land has been negotiated that will benefit water resources and wildlife in south Florida. In exchange for 28,000 acres of desert in Nevada, that had been under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, and a 99-year lease on another 14,000 acres, the federal government will receive 4600 acres of south Florida wetlands from the Aerojet-General Corporation. Then, in turn, the government will sell the Florida property to the South Florida Water Management Authority for use in managing water resources in southeast Florida and the Everglades. Proceeds from the sale, about \$2.4 million, will be used by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to buy land in and around the Key Deer and Lower Suwannee National Wildlife refuges in Florida.

**The Winchester Division of Olin Corporation, along with Winchester distributors and dealers, donated \$8350 to the North American Association of Hunter Safety Coordinators. The donation will be used by the association to further promote sportsmanship and safety and to ensure the future of the shooting sports.**

A National Wildlife Federation publication, "Acid Lakes Directory," lists 1734 large lakes the Environmental Protection Agency has identified as being either acidic or in danger of becoming acidic because of acid precipitation. Furthermore, because of the selective nature of the surveys, which were conducted in 18 eastern states and ten western states, there are actually nearly 16,000 acidic or sensitive lakes in the regions surveyed.

Eagles and ospreys continue to do well on national forests in Northeast United States. According to 1987 surveys, 516 eagle nests and 252 osprey nests were found. Of the eagle nests, 281 were occupied—an increase of 37 over the previous year's total—and 315 eaglets were produced, up from the 263 that fledged in 1986. Of the 252 osprey nests located, 157 were used and 222 young produced, increases of 20 nests and 37 young over 1986 tallies.





This 216-page soft-cover book contains all of Ned Smith's "Gone for the Day" columns which appeared in **GAME NEWS** over a four-year period, including approximately 40 full-page wildlife illustrations and over 100 pen and ink sketches. Price, \$4 delivered.

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*Snowy Egret*, by John Pritko, is the sixth limited edition fine art print available through the Pennsylvania Game Commission's Working Together for Wildlife program. As with the previous editions, *Snowy Egret* is limited to 600 signed and numbered prints. Image size is approximately 15 × 22½ inches, printed on acid-free 100 percent rag paper. Price is \$125; framed prints are an additional \$97.50. Requests for specific numbers will be satisfied on a first-come, first-served basis. Limited numbers of *Country Lane Kestrel* and *Autumn Challenge*, 1986 and 1987 prints, are still available. Orders should be sent to the Pennsylvania Game Commission, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Dept. AR, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.



# PENNSYLVANIA GAME NEWS

SEPTEMBER 1988

60 CENTS



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## **Voluntary Waterfowl Stamp No. 6**

Pennsylvania's 1988 waterfowl management stamp, a pair of wood ducks, created by Cedar Falls, Iowa, artist John Heidersbach, is the sixth "duck" stamp offered by the Game Commission. Funds derived from stamp sales are used for wetland acquisition, habitat development, and waterfowl-related education. Stamps cost \$5.50 each, \$22 for a plate block of four, and \$55 for a full sheet of ten, delivered. For additional savings, the cost for five or more ten-stamp sheets, in any combination of years, is \$40 per sheet. The 1986 stamps will be available through December 31, 1988, at which time all remaining supplies will be destroyed.

Stamps are available at the Game Commission's Harrisburg headquarters, region offices, the Pymatuning and Middle Creek Wildlife Management areas, and at participating hunting license issuing agents and stamp dealers. Signed and numbered fine art prints of this design are available from art dealers and galleries nationwide.



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**COVER PAINTING BY GERRY PUTT**  
(Cover Story on Page 50)

# Commonwealth of Pennsylvania



## Governor's Office

### PROCLAMATION

#### PENNSYLVANIA HUNTING AND FISHING DAY September 24, 1988

*Pennsylvania has been blessed with an abundance of natural resources that for hundreds of years have prompted growth and development. William Penn, our Commonwealth's founder, three centuries ago wrote of a "good and fruitful land" where "fowl, fish and wild deer" were plentiful and "the air is sweet and clear, the heavens serene."*

*Today, Pennsylvania continues to cherish its natural heritage. The Commonwealth's Constitution declares that the state's public natural resources are the "common property of all the people," who have a right to "the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and esthetic values of the environment."*

*Nearly three million licensed sportsmen and women, through hunting and fishing, play a vital role in helping the Commonwealth maintain its rich and healthy environment. Through the Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, these men and women exemplify the virtues of conservation and preservation. Together, they are ensuring that Pennsylvania's natural resources remain intact for the generations to come.*

*Therefore, I, Robert P. Casey, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, do hereby proclaim September 24, 1988, as PENNSYLVANIA HUNTING AND FISHING DAY. I urge all citizens to join the Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs in their efforts to preserve our land.*



*GIVEN under my hand and the Seal of the Governor, at the City of Harrisburg, this tenth day of June in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and eighty-eight, and of the Commonwealth the two hundred and twelfth.*

*Robert P. Casey*  
Robert P. Casey  
Governor





**HUNTING** in general requires walking; that's a fact. A hunter who refuses to wander farther than a few hundred yards from his vehicle just isn't going to be very successful.

## To Walk or Not to Walk

By Dave Fisher

I SLIPPED off the steep ridge and took up a calling position several hundred yards above the waterfall. It was a cool crisp morning, with the temperature trying its best to creep into the teens. I fought the desire to keep moving in the ankle deep, crackling leaves and dug in beneath a big wild cherry. It was useless to continue on out the ridge under these conditions.

Game was plentiful on the ridge and soon several squirrels moved in my direction, obviously curious about my turkey calling. A couple does moved around above me and two respectable bucks thrashed trees below. But no turkeys.

Curiosity finally got the best of me,

and I slowly walked the entire ridge, talking to several hunters in the process. Turkeys were definitely in the area, and I heard of at least four confirmed kills. I kept thinking I should have held my quiet position above the falls.

At 11 o'clock I fought hard to catch my breath, struggling with the tough climb back to the truck. As I approached the clearing above the falls, the torn and scattered leaves told the story. At least five turkeys had fed and crossed through the opening. I had simply walked away from my wild Thanksgiving bird.

Over the past several years I've gotten slower, older, fatter and, with the exception of the turkey incident, a whole lot





**THE SNOWY EGRET is the seventh species in the Game Commission's Working Together for Wildlife program. The program is intended to generate support for nongame animals. This year's snowy egret patch is priced at \$3, delivered. Patches of the bluebird, bobcat, kestrel and elk are still available; those of the osprey and river otter are sold out. Decals (\$1 each) of the first six species are still available, but none of the egret is being made. Order from the Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.**

smarter. I still don't mind putting on a few miles when the situation calls for it, but I want to do it at my speed—slow!

Many times the species being hunted dictates which part of the body gets blisters. For instance, a hunter rarely kills a spring gobbler by walking, although he may have to spend a lot of time walking before he locates one. In the fall, however, turkeys are rarely located without some heavy duty walking.

That's not really what we're talking about, though. Hunting in general requires walking; that's a fact. A hunter who refuses to wander farther than a few hundred yards from his vehicle just isn't going to be very successful.

What we're really talking about is how much walking or sitting you should do once you have decided your quarry is in a specific area. Again, it depends on the

species and the weather, but I guarantee you will see much more game while you're sitting than you ever will walking. If you can't find the patience to keep those feet in neutral, at least walk slow.

I enjoy hunting squirrels early in the season, and I've refined the sit and walk method almost to a science.

I hit the woods at daylight and set up immediately in a likely looking area. If I don't see some action within an hour or less of daylight I start to move. I don't go far, and I move slow, very slow. If another spot looks real "squirrely" I may set up again, but only for half an hour or so, never more than 45 minutes. Then I'm moving again. Sooner or later I'll locate squirrels moving in the trees in front of me.

Once I see a squirrel I set up within range and he's usually in the bag within my half-hour time limit. If I see several squirrels in the same area I may wait longer, but that's usually not necessary. At times I've shot up to four squirrels in less than 15 minutes once I moved in on them. During an entire day of squirrel hunting I'll cover very little ground, sometimes just a few hundred yards.

After a couple weeks of squirrel hunting, I dive headfirst into chasing cottontails. What I've learned hunting cottontails since my "run through the field" era could fill a book. Now I take a couple good beagles to do much of the walking for me. Still, I've learned that you don't have to cover miles of terrain to bag cottontails.

In the purest sense of the word, I thoroughly hunt an area. I zigzag haphazardly through a certain section, and frequently turn completely around and go through the area another time or two. A cottontail can hide in places small enough to cover a softball, and they'll sit tight and let a fast moving hunter (or dog) go right by. A walk, stop, and search pattern will eventually roust them out.

Cottontails, like most other animals, rarely live alone, and once one is encountered you can bet your pickup there are more close by. Don't simply walk out of the area in search for others. Stay put. Look around. Examine the ter-



**WHEN YOUR** feet start itching and you've decided to see what's up ahead, remember you may be walking away from a nice 8-point, or worse, he could be walking straight for you.

rain closely and you'll put more bunnies in the gamebag and a lot less miles on your feet.

If I've learned anything while wearing out many pairs of boots, it's that deer have feet too. And a deer, even when pressured heavily, will do his best to stay in his chosen area, and he'll return to it at the earliest possible moment.

While squirrel hunting, I have seen bucks exit an area at breakneck speed, only to witness them sneaking back to the exact bed they had left half an hour earlier. During buck season one year I was pursuing a particular deer that stayed in a small thicket near my home. I quietly slipped into the area late in the afternoon and began my wait. In just a half hour or so a group of drivers came up the valley, banging pots and pans and yelling at the top of their lungs. They passed by the thicket I was watching and absolutely nothing stirred. As they continued their noise barrage past me and beyond I seriously considered walking into a new and "fresh" area. But because I was already in position and was running out of time, I decided to stick it out. As the last glint of light faded, even I was surprised when 2 doe and "my" buck materialized from the tiny thicket. Had I gotten itchy feet again, I would have walked away from a nice 8-point.

Here in western Pennsylvania and throughout much of the state, walking or tracking down a buck is simply a myth of the past. With the number of hunters in the woods today, walking simply pushes deer into another waiting rifleman. I still chuckle every year before deer season, when television weathermen forecast a good tracking snow for area hunters.

Still hunting, the very slow, deliberate sneaking walk, where the hunter stops frequently, is still a very effective deer



hunting method, and I use it often. But here again, that's much different than just covering miles and miles of territory. An effective still hunter strives to cover a much smaller section of ground, but to cover it thoroughly and effectively.

To walk or not to walk? That's the question. The answer is governed by species, weather, and surrounding terrain. Walking is certainly necessary for effective hunting, but many of us tend to over do it. I'm convinced that most hunters would fare much better if they would cut their normal movements by half. We see wild animals because of their movements, and they see us even more clearly by our own movements.

When your feet start itching and you've decided to see what's up ahead, remember you may be walking away from a nice 8-point, or worse, he could be walking straight for you.

## Paradox and Chameleon

By Ben Johnson

WEBSTER defines paradox as “contrary to expectation.” “Chameleon,” he says, is “a fickle or changeable person or thing.” Our mourning dove, also known as turtledove or just plain dove, fits both definitions to a remarkable degree.

This innocuous bird, perching on telephone wires or picking up gravel at the roadside, suddenly turns into a veritable fiend—come September. Look as hard as you can, you will never find an olive branch in his beak. It doesn’t take any great imagination, as he streaks by, to picture an afterburner at full flame driving him at supersonic speed. I don’t know how many g’s he endures during his chandelles, Immelmanns and split S’s, but I’m sure it’s more than a human pilot could stand without blacking out. And maybe he does; it would account for his further wild maneuvers.

### Smorgasbord

Doves are one of the few upland birds that have benefitted from the intense cultivation of our lands. Being primarily seed eaters, grainfields are an irresistible smorgasbord for doves. After combining is completed, large flocks descend to fill their crops on the missed grain.

Mourning doves, *Zenaidura macroura*, are classified as migratory birds. Just how migratory they are depends on the weather. We have them around all year, except when the snows are too deep for them to find food and open water. Pennsylvania broods a huge crop of native birds that later burgeons with migratory birds from the more northern areas. All to the benefit of our shot-gunners.

We read of the huge fields of barley stubble, in our western states, with hordes of hunters lining their borders.

In eastern Pennsylvania, such fields are nonexistent. We do, however, have fields that furnish dove shooting which rivals the West’s best.

Pleasant, pre-season scouting is mandatory. Doves select locations with three essentials—the availability of seeds/grains, water, and a roosting spot. It’s not necessary that they be close to each other, only that they are available. The Delaware River, numerous lakes, farm ponds, even roadside mud puddles serve the water needs for the birds in our area. Food is there for the taking, from barnyards to weed and grain fields.

The final part of the trilogy, the roost, is one that will require a bit of searching. Near our farm we have a roost made up of Christmas trees that were not cut and sold and are now 30 or 40 feet tall. This roost has been productive for many years. The major reason doves continue to use this roost is that we have not shot over it. We have observed the flight patterns birds follow going to it. Whether the water-food-water-food-water-roost cycle biologists describe is true, I can’t say. We do know these doves follow predictable paths to their feeding grounds and home to their roost. If you locate one of these paths, you are set for the finest pass shooting you can have.

In late afternoon our doves follow a hillside slope to the roost. Their path takes them over an old wild cherry snag. As this snag is in a fencerow, it’s easy to make a blind. It doesn’t have to be all concealing. Doves detect motion but will ignore a hunter’s broken-up profile. We catch them as they are going over at what seems to be 60 miles an hour. It may take a half-dozen shots to garner enough of the toothsome birds for a meal. The 12 bird a day limit—a difficult total to fulfill—doesn’t provide much table fare. A dove averages only about 4





Sam Linton



ounces live weight, so your limit weighs only 3 pounds—the weight of one mallard. And a dove breast—the only part usually eaten—probably weighs only 1½ ounces or so. Meanwhile the stack of empties grows. You have to be a hand-loader or wealthy to shoot doves.

It is estimated that 75 percent of the doves hatched do not reach the age of one year, but one need not worry about their population. These prolific birds nest at least two times a season. Some biologists have stated that as many as six nestings are possible in the warmer climes. Nests can be found anywhere—doves thrive on civilization. Each year we have several nests in the elms near our bedroom. This nearby nesting can strain man's patience. The interminable cooing, at daybreak, is soothing in the spring. As the summer wears on, it becomes monotonous, and then aggravating.



The nest proper is a masterpiece of incompetent construction. What keeps the eggs from falling through the sparse, randomly placed twigs can be only an act of God. How this tame and—yes—stupid bird can become the elusive September target taxes credibility.

My wife Peggy was nearly turned off by her introduction to dove hunting. We had placed her between rows in a field of tall standing corn. Soon she complained, "How can I possibly hit them while they cross that little bit of sky?" However, she persisted and now misses her share with the rest of us.

Our number two son, Jody, loved to post near the old snag. While he is an excellent shotgunner, his old L. C. Smith accounted for only about two in five, often less than that. In a fit of desperation one may be tempted to shoot nearer the roost—a bad idea as the doves soon learn and move. Shooting a roost is a morale booster, as incoming birds are easier targets, their flaps down for the final approach. But if you do shoot the roost, or a favorite watering hole, your sport will not be long lived. The birds will move and you will lose your pass shooting as well.

Another method, which we have found less productive but available during early afternoon, is to jump-shoot birds from the edges of harvested grain fields. Walk slowly along these edges to flush them from their feeding. The difficulty factor will, if possible, increase. Think back and visualize how the summer birds rose from the side of the road as your car approached. The initial movement was one of seemingly mass confusion. Imagine, if you will, just which bird you would select as your target. As with any other bird shooting, you must select an individual dove; shooting at the flock is a waste of shells. There is a moment in which the bird will straighten out on his escape route. All you have to do is hit his disappearing body—traveling at maybe 60 feet per second.

**AS A GAME BIRD, doves can't be faulted. Hitting them is something else. Skeet and trap shooting may help, but practice on the real thing is the best teacher.**

If other hunters have not disturbed them too much, doves may flush quite near the hunter. They are used to civilization, are accustomed to people and farm equipment, and may hold tight. This will give you a bit—make that a small bit—of time to get off a shot. One memorable day we hunted the edges of a 12-acre field of wheat stubble. Whether doves have short memories, are stubborn, reluctant to leave the din-



ner table, or what, when flushed these birds flew only from one side of the field to the other. By circuitously and slowly easing our way to the landing site, we were able to get another opportunity. Once doves are shot over this ploy is usually ineffectual, but their unpredictable nature makes it worth a try.

Doves can be called. How productive it is during the season is questionable. Summer evenings, when the season is closed, we sit in the backyard with a plastic barrel-shape call and with the typical one-long, three-short coos bring doves to the surrounding trees. In season we don't think it's worth the trouble.

**DOVES FOLLOW** predictable paths to their feeding grounds and home to their roosts. We catch them as they are going over at what seems like 60 miles an hour.

Decoys, too, have been of little value, at least in our shooting experience. When we placed them in and around the old snag, the doves just kept barreling through on their way to the roost. Perhaps a big spread in a grainfield would be an attraction. We haven't found it necessary. Then, too, we are lazy and don't make the effort to lug the fakes around.

A light fast-handling gun is vital for the modest success one can expect. The gauge can be anything you can handle—fast! At the moment, my choice is a Marixa 28-gauge that weighs in at less than 6 pounds. Don't worry too much about the quantity of shot. Spend some time at the pattern board and select, or develop, a load that is uniformly distributed in the 30-inch circle. My  $\frac{3}{4}$ -ounce shot loads are ample. In the 20-bore,  $\frac{7}{8}$ -ounce will usually make excellent patterns, as will 1-ounce in the 12. I find that the double has an advantage in that you have instant choice of choke constrictions. Of course, I'm prejudiced in favor of the side-by-side. Centering your pattern is the determining factor.

Light trap or skeet loads are ideal. Large shot patterns are too sparse and long range shots are usually freaks anyhow. Number 8 or  $7\frac{1}{2}$  shot is perfect. Doves are not hard to kill. My 28 is bored modified and full, but improved cylinder and modified would be better, particularly with plastic wads which shoot tighter for me. Incidentally, I tried a beautiful 410 Sarasqueta double one time and quickly gave up. The  $\frac{3}{4}$ -ounce load patterned well but, I believe, the shot string was too long.



Mark fallen birds carefully; their drab coloration makes them difficult to find. If you have a good retriever, by all means take him along. He should have a very soft mouth.

As a game bird, doves can't be faulted. Hitting them is another thing. Skeet and trap shooting help develop a feel for your gun; other than that practice on the real thing is the best teacher. Clay-bird targets have a predictable rise and fall. Doves supply speed, angles, and twisting and towering shots that can't be duplicated artificially.

The number of dove hunters is increasing. The dove population is increasing. The only thing this increasing pressure can do is make them more difficult to hit—if that's possible.



**UNCUT FOREST, 1961.** This 50-year-old second growth northern hardwoods stand originated primarily from sprouts. The overall basal area for all trees 4½ DBH and over averaged 110 square feet per acre.



**UNCUT FOREST, 1981.** Growth after 20 years included many smaller and poor quality trees that normally would have been cut during a thinning operation. Therefore, except for the clearcuts, these plots were the largest wood producers in the study.

## Deer Browse and Timber Production

By Lincoln Lang, Stephen Liscinsky, and Patrick Donahue

**B**ROWSING of deer on twig tips, tree buds and shrubs has always been of interest and concern to game managers and foresters. Game managers are interested because of the deer food supplied by varying amounts of available woody vegetation and foresters are concerned because of the sometimes harmful effects deer feeding habits have on forest regrowth. What type of forest cutting provides the most deer food in the regrowth of cut-over forests and still allows regeneration of a commercial stand of qual-

ity trees? This question prompted the Game Commission, in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service, to conduct a study started in 1961 and completed in 1981.

The study area chosen consisted of 65 acres on State Game Lands 127 in Monroe County. Trees on this area were a northern hardwood type, predominately red and sugar maples, black cherry, white ash, and beech. Also lightly scattered among the stand were black and yellow birch, trembling and bigtooth aspen, fire cherry,

**LIGHT CUTTING, 1961.** This cutting strategy, in which only 32 percent of the basal area was cut, provided an average of only 17 pounds of deer browse per acre.

**LIGHT CUTTING, 1981.** After 20 years the growth in this stand was only slightly less than in the moderate cuttings. Beech and some striped maple accounted for most of the tree reproduction.







**MODERATE CUTTING, 1961.** In this tract 52 percent of the basal area was cut. Deer browse averaged 23 pounds per acre for the first five years after cutting.



**MODERATE CUTTING, 1981.** Growth here exceeded all other treatments, and the cuttings were found to have the optimum combination of tree numbers and crownsize. Tree reproduction from seeds and sprouts was poor, however, and log quality was diminished.

hop hornbeam, striped maple, juneberry, and red oak. These were all second-growth trees that originated mainly from stumps that sprouted after this forest was previously logged about 1910. Although all trees in the stand were approximately the same age—50 years—they varied in diameter at breast height from 4 to 15 inches. Site, soil, and aspect were fairly uniform.

Study tracts treated were 2½-acre plots cut to simulate actual thinning intensities. Two were lightly thinned—only 32 percent of the basal (sectional) area at breast height was cut. Two more were moderately thinned, with 52 percent of the basal area cut. Another two were thinned by 70 percent, and an even heavier cutting of 83 percent was done on two other plots. Two additional 2½-acre plots

were clearcut. Since there was no market for this wood in 1961, trees were left where felled. Additional cuttings of moderate to heavy intensity were made on the perimeter of the overall area to divert hungry deer from the experimental cuttings to some extent.

### Browse Measured

Browse produced on each individual plot was measured annually for the first five years following the cutting. Seed production from standing trees in the thinned plots, and new tree regeneration resulting after the cutting, were measured periodically over the following twenty years.

Results of this study showed clear-cutting provided the best balance of deer browse production and tree variety in the regrowth. The small size of

**MEDIUM CUTTING, 1961.** Because of the composition of the original stand, sprouting beech stumps helped provide as much deer browse per acre (48 pounds) as the clear-cuttings.

**MEDIUM CUTTING, 1981.** Except for the clearcuttings, these thinning produced the highest number of stems, 80 percent of which were beech. Seven other species comprised the remainder.







**HEAVY CUTTING, 1961.** A few scattered trees, with a basal area of 15 square feet per acre, were left standing. Deer browse produced over the first five years after cutting averaged 34 pounds.



**HEAVY CUTTING, 1981.** Although this cutting strategy yielded fair amounts of commercially important trees, it contained only about half as many species as the clearcuttings, and the growth of the new trees wasn't as good.

these clearcuttings permitted seeding by bordering trees, which contributed to variety. In addition, new trees that grew following clearcutting were superior in size and quality to those that grew following any of the thinning treatments.

### Optimum Combination

The moderately thinned stands appeared to be the optimal combination of trees present and crown development for maximum seed production. This treatment provided the greatest volume of saw log growth.

Considering all aspects of this twenty-year study, clearcutting without any prior thinning is recommended in the intermediate size classes in northern hardwood forests where wildlife is to be considered the primary

forest product and where quality of trees and variety of tree species in the regrowth are desired. If clearcutting is done in scattered 2- to 5-acre patches at the rate of approximately 10 percent of the stand every ten years, it should provide food and cover for deer and the many smaller species of wildlife which benefit from brush stage forest. If larger clearcuttings are deemed necessary, a few scattered trees should be left standing to help ensure some diversity in the future forest.

The authors are Game Commission biologists Lincoln Lang and Steve Liscinsky (who has since retired) and regional forester Patrick Donahue.

**CLEARCUTTING, 1961.** The prolific growth of stump sprouts and seedlings yielded an average of 45 pounds of browse per acre over the first five years after cutting.



**CLEARCUTTING, 1981.** All aspects considered, this cutting strategy provided the best results in terms of benefits to wildlife and tree quality and variety in the regenerating stand.







## ***“PRICELESS”***

**By Connie Mertz**

**I**T WAS A beautiful fall day. Chesnut oak and sugar maple leaves dropped noisily onto the colorful forest floor as I walked out our tree-lined driveway. Another small game season was in progress, and I was checking the small woods bordering the lane. Sure enough, a few squirrels were scampering about. Instinctively, I knew it was a good sign. Within minutes I was dressed for hunting.

Now, as I scan the farm fields from my vantage point, I am convinced more than ever that this land is priceless. I have been tramping it from border to border for over 20 years. I have helped my husband plant and harvest crops, and make hay on hot summer afternoons. Not only did we benefit from its endless bounty, but the wildlife that frequented our farm did, too. Yet, amid all the priceless contributions the land has given to us, I am quite aware that I am responsible for its survival. How I yearn for it to be wild and open.

Every fencerow, every field, hill and meadow is rich in hunting memories. I first hunted in a tall grassy field for ring-

necks, and though seemingly insignificant, it assured me that I had indeed become a hunter. Down through the years this land has provided some real heart-thumping experiences. Sometimes I think I have as many deer stories as there are trees! Practically everywhere I turn I'm reminded of a deer hunting incident that has often made its way to the printed page. What a privilege to be a part of this priceless land I call home.

Life cycles of farm-game species have fluctuated greatly. On land that once supported a nice deer population, only few remain to frequent the fields. The ringneck is now a very rare delight. Back in the early '60s, my husband remembers hundreds of pheasant hunters flocking to the flats around Washingtonville for the opening of small game season. It was a time in the history of the farm that was priceless and memorable. Rabbits, too, roamed the fields and fencerows. Now, because of habitat changes, they are seldom seen. But as those game species decreased, others took their place. The farm is now blessed with wild turkeys, and what a joy to watch them from a bedroom window as they go bugging. Grouse populations are on the increase as well, and gray squirrels are everywhere—except on this afternoon.

The land has not only provided us with many memorable hunting experiences, but it has also been a classroom. For 15 years our family has guided wildlife walks, identifying flora and fauna alike to all age groups, from preschoolers to grandparents. We have taken nocturnal walks, followed animal tracks in the snow, camped out under the stars, and felt a closeness to nature as never before.



The farm has also provided many outdoor thrills. Before our two daughters could even walk, they became acquainted with the outdoors. Heather, our youngest, was only four years old when we all silently crept up on a male grouse drumming. I had waited years for that particular moment. Heather probably will never realize how lucky she was.

The girls happened upon a box turtle's nest in a grassy field one June afternoon. A few months later, they observed five precious turtles hatching from their leathery eggs. It was Christmas in Sep-

tember. Recently we were cutting down some old elm trees that had succumbed to Dutch Elm Disease when, suddenly, we all stood in awe. Two flying squirrels went sailing through the air. We had unintentionally disturbed their nest. Soon the camera was there, and it became an unforgettable afternoon.

I can vividly remember the girls' first experience with a small flock of wild turkeys. The turkeys had just crossed our lane when the girls were returning from school one day. They were startled when turkeys flew up in all directions. They ran to the house so excited that they couldn't talk fast enough. For the first time on our farm, right from the kitchen window, we listened to the turkeys calling as they regrouped. What a thrill!

**FOR 15 years our family has guided wildlife walks, identifying flora and fauna alike, to all age groups, from preschoolers to grandparents. We've felt a closeness to nature as never before.**

This priceless land has provided us with literally hundreds of plants, from herbs to wild foods to poisonous ones. Together as a family, we have eaten violets and made wild strawberry jam. Together we have chewed on sassafras twigs and scarlet sumac berries. Together we have identified wild flowers, trees and shrubs. Together we've discovered aquatic insects hidden under rocks. And, it continues to offer us untold opportunities to observe her priceless possessions.

There are those who take great pride in traveling great distances to hunt. So many of my friends and neighbors have gone west for mule deer, north for black bear, south for turkeys that at times I wonder if there is something wrong with me. I have no desire to travel to faraway places. I'm content right here with what the land chooses to give me. I could take a two-week vacation anywhere in the world, and I couldn't experience the beauty and peace that is



mine right here in my own neck of the woods. Like my ancestors, I have an intimacy with the fields and forests, the hills and valleys. I have felt her warmth, seen her seasonal beauty and experienced her thrills.

I am made even more aware of how precious this land is when I am all too often reminded of the loss of farmland in Montour County. A few short miles away is a fairly large area that hasn't been farmed for years. To passersby, it is just an old abandoned field taking up space — space needed for housing developments. Little does anyone care that it is a wildlife haven. Millions of dollars will soon be spent ruining wildlife habitat. The worst of it is that I can do nothing to stop the destruction.

Several years ago there was serious talk about an energy park in this small county. When I voiced my concerns to a relative she quickly responded, "Oh don't worry. They'll give you a good price for your land."

How much is our little parcel of

ground worth? Who could ever put a price tag on land that has given its tenants so much enjoyment? From the thickets to the wide open spaces, from the ground cover plants to the majestic white oaks, from the lowly woodchuck to the elusive whitetail — all have made their priceless contributions through the centuries.

### Secret Vow

As I view the late fall colors and observe the fields ahead of me, I secretly make a vow. I will do whatever I can to preserve this priceless land. It is a gift that has been entrusted to our family without reservation from past generations.

My aunt was wrong. Not all the money in the world could ever replace the thrill of bagging a buck, watching a gobbler, witnessing the hatching of box turtles, or observing a drumming grouse. The land has given and we have received. I, like all wildlife species, could not survive without it.

**THE GAME** Commission's new library at the Harrisburg headquarters is now open for public use. The 3500-volume research facility includes professional journals and technical reports on wildlife, natural resource management and law enforcement, and popular books and periodicals on hunting, trapping and other outdoor activities. (The agency will be happy to consider book donations for the library.) Library hours are from 7:45 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, providing there are no conflicts. Users are encouraged to make an appointment to ensure the library will be open and the librarian will be available for assistance. Seating capacity is limited; therefore, group sizes must be restricted to seven or less. No materials may be removed from the library, but reference and photocopying services are available for a nominal fee. For appointments or additional information contact: Librarian, Pennsylvania Game Commission, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797; 717-787-9229.









# It Really Wasn't So Easy!

By Richard Tate

“WELL, RICH, that was pretty easy,” my brother Bill told me after he had retrieved the turkey he’d just shot and we prepared to leave the woods. It was only 7:30 on the first Thursday of autumn turkey season, and both of us had shot turkeys as the sun came up.

As he tagged his turkey I replied, “I don’t know, Bill. Maybe this morning seemed easy, but I wouldn’t say that this has been a very easy season.”

As I do every autumn, I began preparing for fall turkey hunting in September and October by hiking local ridges and mountains, looking for turkeys, turkey sign, and areas with food. This had been an especially intense autumn for me: I had not collected a fall turkey for several years, and I wanted to end my drought. I was tired of the humiliation of having to buy a Butterball for Thanksgiving.

The scouting trips revealed several problems that I’d have to overcome. The major problem was that there were no acorns anywhere. I had expected that, however. Ravaging hordes of gypsy moths had defoliated all the local ridges during the summer, and the few remaining live oak trees had had to use their energy to try to survive, not to produce acorns. So I looked for grapevine tangles with fruit, and I managed to find some that were, as my father-in-law, Bob Mingle, likes to say, “blue with grapes.” Another problem was that my favorite after-work hunting spot had been made inaccessible during the year, and I had to concentrate my efforts in other places. I scoured familiar haunts and some unfamiliar areas for traveling flocks as well. A couple of those new spots looked promising, and I could get to them by 3:30 in the afternoon if I really hustled after work. The other dilemma I had to overcome was pressure.

I’m a public ground hunter, and most of the places I frequent are hunted rather heavily, even areas far from hard roads. The new places I had scouted were unknown commodities as far as pressure goes. I didn’t know how hard they would be hunted.

By opening day my dad and I had decided that we would hunt together in an area he had thought looked real hot only a couple days before the season. I would save my easy-to-get-to spots for after-work forays.

## Gorgeous Day

Opening day dawned sunny and warm, a gorgeous day to be in the woods. Early on Dad and I both decided to sit and wait for birds to come our way, not only because the birds would be moving in their usual patterns, but also because there would probably be a lot of hunters running around. With the rash of accidents that have occurred during recent seasons, we felt it would be safer to be sitting. Even so, I had to flash a blaze orange vest at an intruder who tried to sneak in behind me not long after I’d made a series of yelps. That was kind of spooky.

Dad and I had agreed to meet at 11:30 if we had no action; and since there had been none, I eased off the flat where I was sitting and headed to the tree where we’d agreed to rendezvous. On the way five deer trotted past me. I backed against a tree and they came within five yards of me. Four were as bald as I am, but the fifth one was a nice young 5-point. Boy, I’d like to see him in deer season, I mused.

Dad hadn’t seen any turkeys either, so we decided to separate. He decided to sit in another area; I opted to still hunt through some deep hollows where there were some dandy grapevine tan-



### Question

Are battery powered archery sights legal in Pennsylvania?

### Answer

Yes, providing the sight does not cast a beam of light on the animal being hunted.

gles. "I'll meet you back here at 3:00," I told him as I left. The first couple of miles were uneventful, but at 1:30 the action began. I hawk sailed onto a knob above me. Almost immediately I heard squawking from upset turkeys and then saw the hawk zoom back off the knob. There are turkeys up there, I realized, and they chased the predator away. I wasn't sure how to approach them, though. I could either make a wide loop out around them or go almost directly to them and try to surprise them in a little depression I suspected they were in. I chose the direct approach and slowly crawled up the steep bank toward them. But they weren't quite in the depression and spotted me. As they began to run, I started after them, yelling as loud as I could, hoping I could scatter them.

### The Turkeys Flushed

It worked. The turkeys flushed, mostly toward the flat where I'd sat in the morning. Good job, they're scattered a little, I told myself. I decided to just ease over and sit under the tree where I had sat earlier and then headed that way. As I hustled to the tree loud, nonstop calling began from the flat. The old hen, I thought.

When I stopped to listen more closely, however, I recognized that the calling was being done by a person

using a diaphragm caller. As I stood looking the guy stood up and waved. It was obvious he was going to work the birds I had just scattered. I was pretty upset, having worked so hard to find and scatter the turkeys, but for safety's sake I backed off. He was probably sitting there when I flushed the birds, I rationalized.

As I backed off, I ran into Dad and I told him what had occurred. "What do you want to do?" I asked as I tried to include him in my plans to collect one of the scattered birds—after all, he always tried to include me in all of his hunts.

"Nothing," he smiled as he pointed to a log. Behind the log lay a fine young gobbler. You had better set up," he said. "If you go back where you broke the flock, you might be able to call one in. I'm going home to clean this bird."

I agreed, though I knew most of the birds had flown toward the flat where the other hunter was.

After Dad left I moved into position and began to call. I got no response though, over the next hour or so, but I heard shooting several times from the flat where I wanted to be. Finally, at 4 o'clock, I got a reply. Yelping every two or three minutes, it took me 20 minutes to work the bird in close. Just when I thought he was mine he went silent. I knew he was either looking for me or had been spooked. It was the latter. Not long after the turkey had shut up another person came sneaking along an old woods road. I held up my blaze orange vest for the second time to protect myself.

After the hunter moved on I gathered my gear. There was no sense staying there. Though I am normally not too upset when I fail to bag a turkey—I've gotten used to it over the years—I was certainly discouraged about the events of this day. As I walked out an old logging road toward my truck, my mood was not cheered by finding two feathers stuck in a log, no doubt left by the caller who had worked the turkeys I had flushed. When I got home and found that I'd also lost my favorite diaphragm caller, my mood worsened. Bobby, my



8-year-old son, came to the rescue. He gave me a note saying, "I love you whether you get a turkey or not, Dad."

After a brief visit with Dad the next afternoon, when he related how he had called in a whole flock of turkeys from which he'd taken his jake, I headed out to scout where I planned to hunt after work the next day. At 4:30 I spotted a turkey walking uphill over a knob. I figured he was the last bird of a moving flock, and that they were going to roost up there. I decided right then where I'd be in the morning.

**WE PLANNED to sit about 100 yards apart and both call, unless we heard the old hen calling the brood. If we did, we would try to run her off. Otherwise, the hunt would end quickly.**

I reported off from work, taking the first of the two personal leave days I am allotted each year, and by 6:00 Monday morning I was situated at the top of the knob where the turkeys should have roosted. I clucked, yelped, and carefully listened for an hour, but not a peep did I hear; the turkey(s) from the previous evening had outwitted me. It was still early, though, so I headed for territory far from a hard road. About an hour later I heard a turkey yelping below me. Excited, I set up with my back against a big maple tree and began to call. I called and called but I couldn't get the bird to come in. He paced back and forth below me, just out of range. About 8:30 I heard leaves crunching behind me. I turned slowly and, yep, you guessed it; once again I flashed my orange. The turkey saw it, too, though, and as my stalker vanished, so did the bird.

After that incident I tried to hunt up a flock. I covered a couple miles of steep rocky mountainside, but my effort was to no avail. Finally, about 2:00, I decided to head back and try to work on the turkey I had scared earlier. I arrived at the maple at 2:45, and at 3:00 I got the turkey to answer. He hadn't gone far, and as I called, he closed the ground be-

tween us to about 50 yards, still out of shotgun range. All of a sudden he reversed field and put a tree between us. He had somehow spotted me.

I was pretty discouraged at that point, but I wasn't ready to give up. I had an hour and a half of hunting left, and I thought I'd hunt the hilly areas between me and my truck. There was a chance I could luck into a turkey before dark.

Not long after I started I spotted another hunter walking briskly my way. It didn't take me long to recognize his distinctive hat. It was Dad, armed with his



trusty 35 mm camera. "C'mon, Rich," he hissed when he saw me. "There are some turkeys out toward your truck and I think they're from a broken flock. I saw two singles as I was heading your way."

We hustled to where he'd spotted the birds. "You stay here and call," he advised. "They ought to be sneaking around. I'll wait for you at your truck."

When Dad left I eased over a little hogback to set up. I spotted four or five turkeys right away, racing like world class sprinters. I tried to run a loop around them, but they were too fast for my tired 37-year-old legs. Dejectedly, I returned to the hogback and called every seven or eight minutes for the next hour: no replies. When I stood up to leave, a lone turkey about 50 yards away flushed wildly. I could only stare.

When I related my tale of woe to Dad

he smiled and told me about several birds that had walked past him as he sat at the truck. "I tried to get their photo," he said, "but they saw me and ran. Heck, it's harder to get a picture of them than it is to shoot one."

I couldn't relate to that. Having failed to collect a fall turkey for several consecutive seasons, I thought shooting one was plenty tough enough.

### Resumed the Chase

After work on Tuesday I resumed the chase. I drove out to the ridge where I had hunted the previous morning and began to hunt through a stretch of grapevines. I ran into fresh turkey scratching almost immediately, and soon afterwards, I heard turkeys squawking at each other. I quickly sat down and tried to call them back, but the next yelps I heard sounded farther away. It was time to run another loop, I told myself, and I hurriedly set off, hoping to intercept them at a dip in the ridge I figured they would go through. At the end of my loop I found that I was still trailing the turkeys, but they were in a patch of thick vines not far ahead of me. I decided to stalk them.

I got within 40 yards of the flock before a couple of the birds spotted me, putted, and began to run. One bird halted in a small opening in the vines and then looked for the source of the trouble. I quickly got the bead of my gun on it, released the safety, and shot. Pieces of grapevine flew everywhere, catching all of my shot pattern, and the turkey and all his flockmates flew off in the same direction. I looked for evidence of a hit anyhow, but I knew I had pulled off the bird in my excitement. Not a feather did I find. It was a long, discouraging walk back to my truck as darkness fell. Events were certainly going the turkeys' way.

I planned to hunt the same area the next evening after work, but when I arrived I found several other cars. My secret spot appeared to be pretty popular. Instead, I headed off for another ridge I had scouted earlier in the fall.

It was nearly the end of legal shooting

time when I spotted four or five birds easing up the ridge, heading to roost. They were too far to shoot, so I decided to try to scatter them and then take my last personal leave day to try to collect one in the morning. Yelling even louder than I had on opening day, I broke up the flock. Turkeys flew in all directions, and the flock of four or five turned into a flock of eight or ten, and they were well scattered. Tomorrow would be a turkey hunter's dream, I thought, surely these birds will call.

On the way home I stopped to talk to Dad, and he told me that my brother did not have to work the next day. He suggested that I invite him to come along. He had been hunting hard, too, and we knew he was anxious to get a bird.

Bill sure was anxious. He was ready before I was the next morning. He arrived at my house at 4:45, while I was still trying to force down a bowl of cereal. We set up our strategy as I finished. We decided we'd take his truck and mine in case one of us got lucky and wanted to leave before the other was ready. We planned to sit about a hundred yards apart and to both call, unless we heard the old hen calling the brood. If we did, we would try to run her off. Otherwise, the hunt would end quickly.

At first light I heard some clucks from a turkey in a tree off to my left. I clucked back with my new glass caller. Only a minute or two later I heard the turkey leave its tree. It landed right in front of me, only 20 yards away.

I had set up perfectly. My back against a large tree, my 12-gauge propped on my knees, my mask covering my face. All I had to do was move the gun slightly to the right to cover the bird's head/neck region, move the safety to the firing position, and squeeze the trigger. That's just what I did.

The turkey collapsed right away. I hurried to it to make sure it didn't perform a miraculous escape. The young turkey lay still. I quickly tagged it, unloaded my gun, and then returned to my seat, hoping Bill would get a crack at one, too. But after five or ten minutes of rather deafening silence, the loud, insis-



tent yelping of an old hen started up. I picked up my turkey and headed off toward Bill. I wanted to get him and run the hen off as we had planned. He wanted to stay put, though, after hearing my suggestion, thinking the old hen was pretty far off. He also had heard some clucking up behind him.

"Do you want me to call?" I asked anxiously. "I'll move up behind you 20 or 30 yards and call if you want me to."

"Okay," Bill whispered.

After I had situated myself, I began. I used two callers: one was a diaphragm which I have some confidence in; the other was the glass caller I'd used earlier. I used the diaphragm to mimic the loud, persistent yelpings of the hen, and I used the glass caller to cluck and make shorter runs of yelps. Suddenly, after only about 15 minutes of calling, I spied a turkey off to our right, only 35 or so yards from Bill. It hadn't called at all. There had been some kee-kee runs from out to our left, but this bird had appeared as if by magic. Anyhow, as the hen continued to yelp and the turkey to

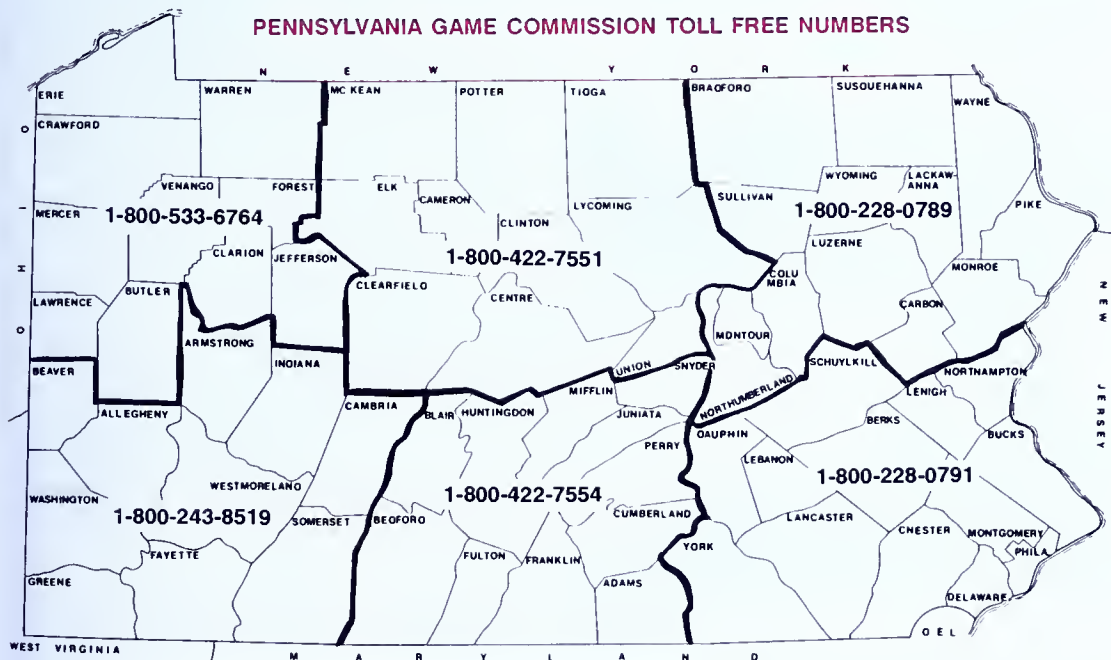
our left continued to kee-kee, this bird to our right searched for us. When it went behind a small tree I saw Bill's gun appear. When the bird stepped out from behind the tree, I heard the crack of the 222 section of his over-under combination gun. At the shot the bird flopped, and Bill raced to it. When he got closer he finished it with a shot from the shotgun barrel. That was when he picked the bird up, tagged it, brought it back to where he had sat, and remarked about how easy this hunt had seemed.

Maybe the morning's hunt seemed easy to him, but it really hadn't been so easy for me to collect a fall turkey after several blank autumns. I had put on a lot of miles during the preseason and during the actual hunts, had been frustrated several times, and had given up all my personal leave days to be in this morning's situation.

But you know what? The final, *apparently* easy success made the work and frustration well worthwhile. I was really delighted that I didn't have to buy a Butterball for Thanksgiving.

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USE THE agency's new toll free (800) numbers to contact a wildlife conservation officer; the officers' home phone numbers are no longer being published. Phones will be manned about 15 hours a day, 24 hours a day during the major hunting seasons.



# Open Roads to Great Doe Hunting

By Bryce Hall

PGC Forester, Northcentral Region

**A**RE YOU tired of seeing orange-clad hunters behind every other tree when you go doe hunting? Tired of standing on watch for hours and not seeing any deer because they're on posted ground where they seem to know they are safe? If you're in the market for a new hunting area, one with high doe populations, very little hunting pressure and one where you're always welcome—read on!

The Game Commission has been making it a practice to open many roads on State Game Lands for antlerless deer season, yet many hunters have failed to take advantage of the opportunity. That's too bad. There are so many acres in the state not being hunted during the antlerless season that even if everyone who reads this article travels to the several Game Lands I mention there will still be plenty of room for everyone. Great doe hunting can be guaranteed, however, if, and only if, you are willing to park your car and walk at least 200 yards off the traveled road. Antlerless deer

hunter success rates are going down and I can not help but think that one major cause is that doe hunters are becoming increasingly lazy in their hunting habits. Many think a person shouldn't have to drag a doe more than a couple hundred yards to a road. These "hunters" are missing out on most of the excitement involved in the actual hunt. The sad part is that their children are picking up these same poor habits.

Now let's get on to some great doe hunting areas. For years roads on many State Game Lands have been opened in antlerless deer season, yet few people have been aware of it. Most of these roads are single-lane, and provide the only vehicle access into the heart of the Game Lands. Most of these have intersecting pipelines, powerlines, or other roads and trails that are kept closed to vehicular traffic. These can and should be hunted on foot as they provide numerous paths to follow into relatively unhunted sections of Game Lands. If you are unfamiliar with the Game Lands you may obtain a current topographical map of the area from your local sporting goods store. In many instances the State Game Lands boundary, major roads, some trails, pipelines, and power lines will be illustrated on the topo maps.

In some areas doe can be pretty wary after buck season. Make it a point, therefore, to hunt areas of heavy cover; hemlocks and shrub areas in stream bottoms, patches of laurel, or areas where timber sales have created food and cover are good places to hunt white-tails. With just two people hunting to-



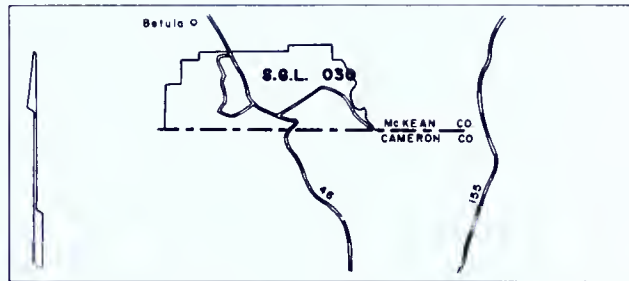
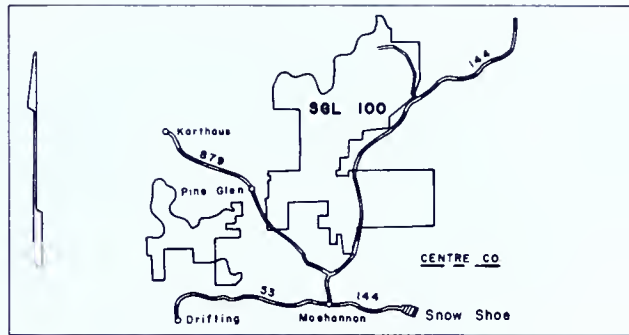
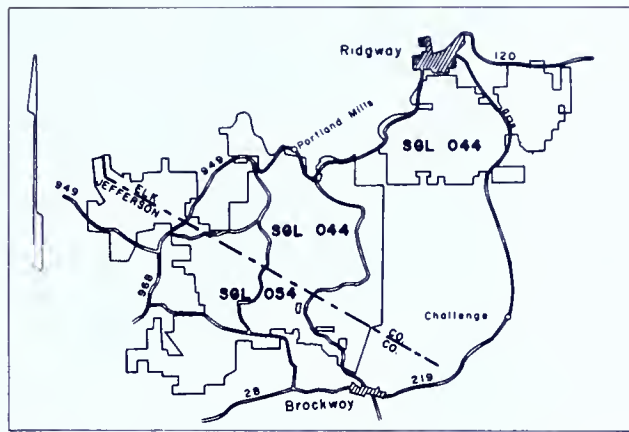
**KELLY ANN RUNSER, Erie, dropped this deer—her first—in Crawford County last year.**



HERE ARE but three State Game Lands on which roads will be opened—weather permitting—during the antlerless deer season. For information on other State Game Lands contact your local Game Commission region office.

gether you can each greatly increase your chances of harvesting a doe by having one person slow hunt through a patch of thick cover while the other watches. Every doe season I use that technique to push countless deer out of small patches of thick cover for my wife to shoot at, and shoot at, and shoot at. She has given numerous deer the opportunity to grow old and wary.

The following maps of roads open on State Game Lands are in counties that normally offer plenty of excess doe licenses for sale. Don't be afraid to break old habits and try a new area for doe hunting this coming year, especially if you like seeing more deer than fluorescent orange scattered throughout the woods. Most of the roads shown on the maps will be open only during the antlerless deer season. The roads may remain closed in antlerless deer season, however, if they are extremely muddy or covered with heavy snow, making them unfit for vehicle traffic. For more information on roads open in your area contact your local region office, via the agency's new 800 telephone network. Happy hunting!



== Roads open in antlerless deer season

### Potter County Antlerless License Information

This year the Game Commission will again supervise and conduct the issuance of Potter County antlerless deer licenses and, if they're available, the new bonus deer tags and combination licenses for the county. Applications should be sent to: Pennsylvania Game Commission, P.O. Box 5038, Jersey Shore, PA 17740. Applicants should black out "County Treasurer" and "County" on the official envelope and fill in the above address. Checks for these licenses must be made payable to the "Pennsylvania Game Commission," not to the county treasurer.

The agency will begin accepting Potter County antlerless deer license applications from residents on October 3. Nonresident applications and bonus deer tags will be accepted beginning October 24.







# Indian Summer Squirrels

By Bill Rozday

**M**OST AUTUMNS bring to the Appalachian region a time of unseasonable warmth and dryness, an "Indian Summer" that suggests July or August. For squirrel hunters, however, at least those conditioned to believe that hunting is best done with wet leaves underfoot to silence footsteps, this time of the season is forsaken. As a result, they often miss some of the most intriguing and challenging small game hunting—Indian Summer squirrel stalking.

The satisfaction of warm weather squirrel stalking lies in the obvious challenge of the sport, a challenge that forces a reliance on basic hunting skills such as keen observation and silent walking. It is in the oak forests at this season that much of the reputation of the sharp-eyed Appalachian hunter had its source and is still being earned to this day.

On the occasion of my first fox squirrel I was crossing a coal stripping bordered by oaks when I spied a curious deformity on a horizontal tree branch ahead of me. Had I not passed a thousand tree branches in my years of roaming the woods, I would have never acknowledged anything different about it. I considered it odd, however, that this burl grew on a young branch and, in particular, only on top and not all around. It seemed out of place.

Because I suspected the growth of wood might, in reality, be a hiding squirrel, I found myself frozen to the spot. I hesitated to walk over and scrutinize something as unglamorous as a tree canker but was, by the same token, reluctant to approach and frighten a piece of game. I waited and watched. Eventually the twitch of a bushytail identified the object. At my shot the bump scrambled to the ground and raced for cover—spared for the moment because it had been lying parallel to the limb.

I searched the trees for some sign of

the fugitive fox squirrel and happened to notice it peeking out from a perch some distance up a tree trunk. When I worked my way over to one side of the tree, it shifted over to the other. Anxious to obtain my first squirrel of this kind, I resorted to an unusual hunting tactic.

Many dismiss this technique as an obscure piece of woodlore. Nevertheless, tossing a stone onto the leaves on the far side of a tree trunk does, at times, entice an edgy squirrel to slip around to the near side. Already nervous in its trapped state, the quarry reacts to any noise and exposes itself for a shot.

I threw successive chunks of coal waste around the trunk, the squirrel showing movement each time. I displaced a fair quantity of slag by the time I coaxed the target into the position from which it fell to my shot. Still, the tactic is sufficiently useful that I continue to use it.

## Productive All Day

One of the distinguishing features of Indian Summer squirrel stalking is the fact that it can be productive all day long. Though squirrels are more active during morning and evening, they actually forage all day at this time of year. Seemingly mindful of the impending winter, they seize the last warm afternoons as an opportunity to bury acorns to feed on later. Knowing that frees squirrel hunters from the custom of getting up before dawn.

The hunter who stalks during Indian Summer should remember, of course, that flawless weather brings noisy footing, footing so delicate that one misstep sends squirrels scampering to their dens. Squirrels are able to go about their business in pleasant weather because the noise of predators such as the hunter carries far. The hunter, by contrast, likes this season because the squirrel's sounds are louder and therefore easier to sort out. Blustery condi-

tions would not only make game reluctant to move, but also complicate the hunter's pursuit.

Indian Summer weather simplifies equipment needs. Dry conditions and crunchy leaf litter make a hiking boot, a pair broken in that won't cause clumsy slips, a good choice. The warmth allows coats and even shirts to be shed, turning hunters into blue jean-clad natives when the temperature hits the 80s.



The shotgun, as opposed to the traditional 22, rates as best for this type of hunting. The foliage masking the woods permits few accurate rifle shots because most chances occur while the squirrels are moving through the thick cover. The stalk, while much like a big game hunt at the outset, resembles more a rabbit hunt at times like these. I prefer the 20-gauge for this kind of work.

Preseason scouting plays a big role in squirrel stalking. The moving hunter needs to find ample quantities of chewed acorns, cut twigs and other signs. September is an excellent month to scout because the heavy foliage per-

mits unnoticed approaches and also indicates the whereabouts of game when the leaves rustle. Squirrels spend time in the high branches then and are easily detected on quiet evenings.

The hunter without large tracts of oak forest at hand must identify some of the other foods that attract game. In the absence of acorns—in fact, even when acorns are present—a black walnut tree with a heavy crop acts as a magnet for bushytails. It seems each walnut tree is furnished with at least one squirrel eating in its branches or resting nearby. In the Northeastern states, it is the butter-nut tree that proves the attraction.

Stalking a bushytail is, to a considerable degree, a process of recognizing and cataloging squirrel sound. The hunter learns peculiar things such as what squirrel teeth gnawing on a black walnut sound like. He gains the ability to distinguish between the scratchy rustling that translates into “chipmunk” and the more obvious one that betrays the presence of its larger cousin. The sounds of nut shells dribbling onto the ground or of the animal moving through a leafy treetop become familiar, as do the wide variations of squirrel conversation.

### Walking Technique

The stalk itself amounts to a study in walking technique. During every stride, the hunter analyzes the forest floor in frames, like a photographer composing a picture, to avoid stepping on any leaves and twigs that produce noise. He needs to control his entire body; brushing against branches and moving in an erratic fashion both spell doom for a squirrel stalk.

Not long ago I discovered an intriguing solution to the problem of slipping up on squirrels with a minimum of noise. I stalk along footpaths where the exposed dirt cushions my footfalls and allows me to stroll through the woods without alarming wildlife. Having a clear avenue of walking space eliminates attention-drawing movements such as ducking limbs and mounting logs. I've found squirrels scratching



around in leaves often only yards from the path and in plain view.

The advantage of quiet footing became apparent one evening while I was walking on a dirt road after a hunt. The air had settled into the steep hollow through which the road ran. As I walked with silent steps the sound of squirrel feet echoed all around the sharp slopes. In a sense, those woods represented what a trout pool represents to an angler, the audible stirrings of squirrels supplanting the rising forms of fish. The road offered a starting point for my stalks.

### Refinements

Certain refinements in foot travel make it easier to close the distance between the squirrel stalker and his quarry. If the animal's conversation slackens and breaks off, the hunter interprets it as evidence of fright at his presence and stops moving altogether. If logs lay on the ground, he uses them to aid in a silent approach. When a breeze springs up, he takes advantage of the tap of falling leaves and rustling of branches to proceed a little faster.

There is more to stalking than just using the ears, however. As in still hunting for deer, the hunter learns to seek out little things with his eyes, watching for parts of squirrels rather than entire animals. These targets prove almost as elusive as white-tailed deer. Having occupied the forest for thousands of years, squirrels have learned to slip out of sight like apparitions. Though much larger than their relatives the chipmunks, bushytails produce a disturbance little more than comparable. After the hunter hears a bushytail and succeeds in spotting a nut or oak tree likely to hold it, the greatest test of eyesight most outdoorsmen ever face confronts him as he tries to detect the animal itself.

I recall a stalk when I pinpointed an area from which a gnawing sound had originated. I focused my attention on a logical walnut tree, scanned the trunk and might have passed it by but for something that resembled a brush dangling from the juncture of two branches.

Unlike a proper brush, however, this had a limp appearance and unevenly arranged bristles. I concluded it was the tail of a squirrel hiding in otherwise complete secrecy. I soon picked out the squirrel's head and ended the stalk. On many occasions only an inch-by-inch examination of a tree trunk uncovered the quarry. Working under conditions such as these, you might say the squirrel stalker earns what he takes home.

I remember a long spell of fair weather when, despite the fact that many leaves still hung on the trees, enough covered the ground to make a quiet walk nearly impossible. The floor of the oak grove amplified even the slightest sounds. I made every move a deliberate one but heard a scampering commotion tracing the gray squirrel's flight. I resumed my progress toward a target I expected to find not far away.

### Crept Closer

Though it sought the dense cover created by an isolated hemlock, I crept closer and spotted the squirrel mounted on a low branch. To eyes accustomed to scanning leaf-covered trees, my quarry appeared to be sitting in plain view. The sharp outlines of the evergreen boughs blocked out background distractions while a certain amount of visibility existed within the hemlock's shade.

I saw the squirrel's tail curled there, dull in silhouette and framed in hemlock light like a large paintbrush attached to the end of a painting. Making the shot, I entered the environment of dim grayness cast by the tree, seeing at my feet the squirrel's contrast of brighter grayness. The bands of color on its tail shone like the hues of a subdued rainbow.

Squirrel stalking involves a challenge perhaps unsurpassed in the province of small game. It is a timeworn tradition revived every October, a phase of hunting that affirms the worth of pioneer pursuits and backwoods ways. Colored by warm afternoons and autumn foliage, the pursuit of Indian Summer bushytails transcends mere sport and becomes a genuine celebration.



**TOM STREAMS, coroner, Wildlife Conservation Officers Art Hamley and Mel Shake, and the author have developed a comprehensive community program to help outdoorsmen become more health and safety conscious.**

**How to avoid a . . .**

## **Trauma in the Woods**

**By B. J. Pino**

**Director of Operations,  
Citizens' Ambulance Service**

**S**INCE 1986 a group of dedicated public servants in Indiana County has been offering a seminar to help hunters become better outdoorsmen. "Trauma in the Woods," is an informative evening program designed to teach outdoorsmen how to avoid accidents, and how to deal with them should they occur. The program began two years ago when I suggested to Wildlife Conservation Officer Mel Shake that hunters should be encouraged to use a whistle in the woods to summon help, not the traditional three-shot volley. Gun shots, of course, are common sounds during the big game seasons; a whistle is not.

The Whistle in the Woods concept was not just well received, it blossomed into a comprehensive community pro-

gram designed to help all outdoorsmen become more health and safety conscious. Area physicians, paramedics, wildlife conservation officers and local businesses have enthusiastically joined in the effort. Physical conditioning, proper clothing, care of equipment, map reading, how to summon assistance, first-aid procedures, and a review of hunting regulations highlight the lectures and demonstrations. Following the speakers at last year's seminar, local vendors displayed hunting equipment, giving attendees a chance to browse, talk informally with the speakers, and review all they had just heard.

Over 300 people attended the 1986 seminar, and last year's attendance jumped to more than 450. An even



**DISPLAYS** and exhibits by local vendors give attendees a chance to browse, talk informally with the many speakers, and review all the program information.

larger turnout is expected this year. Each participant is offered a free blood pressure check and given a whistle—donated by Fisher Scientific Company.

Everybody also leaves with a few basic facts:

1. to hunt safely and to be absolutely sure of his target
2. to prepare himself, both physically and with the proper equipment
3. to know the area in which he hunts and, just as important, how to summon help if needed, i.e. local EMS, 911, etc.
4. A whistle in the woods means a hunter needs help
5. the key to successfully treating traumatic injury is time—finding the victim quickly and rendering advance care effectively and promptly

Hunter education has dramatically reduced hunting accident rates over the years, yet accidents do happen every

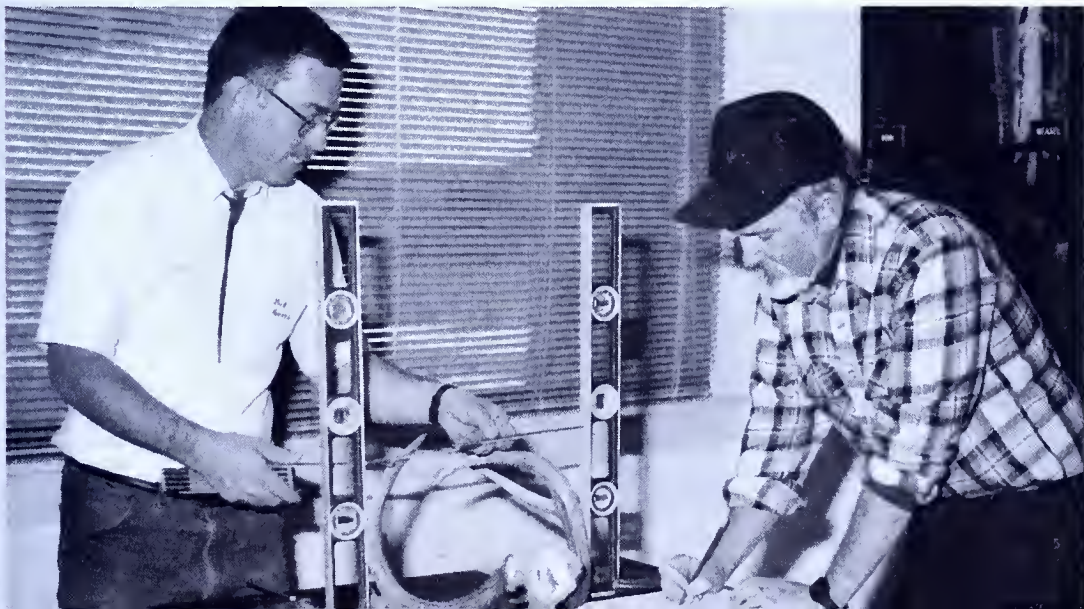


year in Penn's Woods. With our seminar we enhance hunter education with personal conditioning and preparation, and with emergency medical training. Our "Trauma in the Woods" seminar, a concerted community service by the Citizens' Ambulance Service, the Indiana County Chapter of the American Trauma Society, the Game Commission, local hospital, and local sporting goods dealers, has proven to be not just an informative event, but also one that may keep a family tradition alive.

For further information call Citizens' Ambulance Service at 412/349-5511.

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**THINK YOU** have a trophy worthy of Boone and Crockett Club consideration? Last spring over 40 people, including **GAME NEWS** contributor George Block, right, shown here with instructor Jack Reneau, successfully completed a one-week training session to become official B & C measurers. If you have any North American big game trophy that you think will make B & C standards, contact the Game Commission in Harrisburg for a list of official measurers.







MY FOOT shifted and I slid into the creek as the bird disappeared into the trees. I'm sure I saw a gleam of mocking laughter in the bird's eye.

## Homecoming

By Hal Schenck

THE TRIP home had been tedious. I spent hours waiting in airports and standing in lines. Most of my old friends were gone. The people I did find were different, changed subtly by time. Long silences cropped up in conversations. Even the town seemed different. I had been away at college for four years and in the service for two, with only a few weekend trips home to see the folks. Visiting the once familiar places where I was now a stranger left me feeling lonely and with a twinge of regret for the past. It was time for me to go. But before I left I would spend a day in the woods and a night at the hunting camp I hadn't seen for six years.

The day dawned cold and bleak, threatening rain. I donned a turtleneck and heavy wool shirt, a pair of battered khakis, and old army boots. The night before I had checked my Winchester 1400—which still smelled of Hoppe's

applied the previous year—and filled the pockets of my hunting vest with low brass loads of 7½s. As I gulped down a bowl of oatmeal and a cup of black coffee, I reviewed my plans for the day. The previous night's rain meant the grouse would be holding tight, probably in the hemlocks growing along the stream. If I didn't put up any there, I planned on crossing a ridge into the next valley, where I could work a cutting about an acre in size that should produce a bird or two.

The drive to camp was uneventful except for a brief shower which stopped as suddenly as it began. The road changed from hardtop to gravel as it wound its way up into the hills. I parked where the dirt track turned off for camp; I had no intentions of getting stuck. Damp leaves muffled my footsteps as I walked from the car. Rain had cloaked the woods in silence, which softly enveloped me. The



sound of the autoloader's action closing was loud in the stillness.

I started up the old creekbed, trying to avoid the rain slick laurels. The creek was dark and moved slowly, despite the shower. I worked past several large hemlocks which offered fair shelter, but nothing was moving. The wet trees around me stood out starkly against the leaden sky. I remembered a snatch of verse by Robert Frost . . . "these dark days of autumn rain . . . are beautiful as days can be." The gaudy colors of October were gone, but the barren November woods had a somber beauty all their own. As I reflected on the serenity of my surroundings my thoughts wandered from the hunt. I was snapped back to the present by the familiar clatter of wings. No matter how long I hunt, I shall never cease to be startled by the flush of a grouse. Somehow, the birds always catch me off balance and facing the wrong direction. The stock slapped my cheek and I got off a hurried shot, missing badly. My foot shifted and I slid into the creek as the bird disappeared into the trees. I'm sure I saw a gleam of mocking laughter in the bird's eye. Ruefully, I slogged back to the car for a change of clothes. The afternoon was well advanced when I reached it, and the rain had begun and soon turned into a steady downpour, the kind of bone-chilling November rain that slides down

the neck and makes a fire and hot coffee so inviting. The decision to head for the cabin was an easy one.

The cabin is a one story building with running water but no electricity. The elements have weathered most of its paint, and it seems to hunch tiredly in the lee of a hill, seeking refuge from the wind. I gathered some seasoned chunks of oak from the porch and set to work building a fire.

Dusk comes early on a rainy November day in the mountains, and by the time I had a steady blaze going, darkness had crept inside. I eased my foil-wrapped dinner into the coals and perched the blackened coffeepot precariously on the grate. Shadows played in the corners of the cabin. I unrolled my sleeping bag next to the fire and waited. As I gazed into the fire, my mind drifted back over the past. I thought of the woods in May, when I came to the stream after the brightly colored brookies. I remembered the cabin crowded with friends, tense and anxious, unable to sleep, the night before deer season. I thought of deer and grouse, ones missed and ones taken. Rain pattered on the roof and the wind whispered through the eaves. Shadows closed around the old stone fireplace as the blaze dwindled. And as I slid into sleep, staring at the dying embers, I knew why I had come home.

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**A LINE of top quality birdfeeders and bird houses is being offered by Gateway Woodworks, a nonprofit vocational rehabilitation agency that provides training and employment for mentally disabled persons. The products are made of red cedar, galvanized screws and brass hinges. For further information contact Gateway Woodworks, 2336 N. Third St., Harrisburg, PA 17110.**

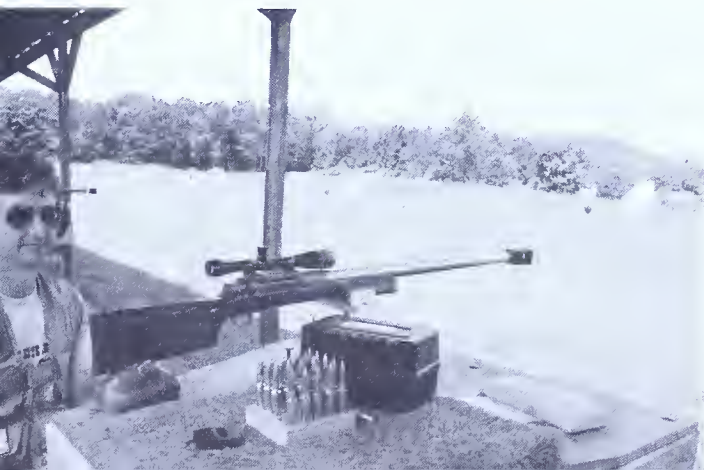




**EVERY** formal shooting competition has a rangemaster to control matches. Below, king-size optical units are used by both coaches and spectators. These sometimes give view of bullet going downrange.

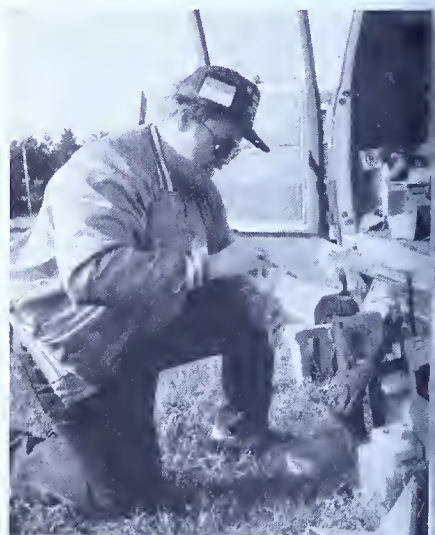


**ERIC WILLIAMS**, Missouri rifleman, awaits command to commence firing. After two days of shooting, he was the champ — for the third time. His best group was 11 + inches.



# The

**THERE ARE SHOOTERS** and the 30-06 is a large rifle cartridge. The Caliber Shooters' Association, even squeak. Their pet is the 50-caliber which they build bolt action benches. Their third annual national champion 1000-Yard Benchrest Club's range men — and one woman — came from Wyoming and Idaho. One man can claim it's the coming shooting go contact FCSA, Route 1, Box 219A,



**CHUCK DOHRING** loads ammo between matches. At 225 grains powder per shot, a pound of powder doesn't last long.





# g 50s

are shooters. For most of us, a 300-plus members of the Fifty (0) Weatherby Magnum is a piping machine gun cartridge, for to use in long range competition. was held in June, at the Original Blines, Lycoming County. Rifle- away as Tennessee, Missouri, n Texas just to observe. Members ay could be right. If interested, TN 37101.

—Bob Bell



**MARTY LIGGINS**, Tennessee sharpshooter, displays unusual shooting position he uses with his Big 50.



**FIRST** relay ready to go, above. Below, April McMurdo, from Wyoming, won one-shot, closest-to-center match, putting 750-gr. bullet within 5 inches of dead center at 1022 yards.



**TARGETS**—Invisible here—are located at bottom edge of far line of trees. Below, Pennsylvanian Bruce Seller ignores benchrest and does his shooting prone.





# FIELD NOTES



## Salvaged

**CAMERON COUNTY**—Bill Heasley, Sewickley, and Tom Kelly, Bellevue, were fishing Sinnemahoning Creek near the mouth of Wycoff Run when they saw an osprey. They watched the hawk make several dives and finally catch a 15-inch sucker. As the osprey rose and began to fly off, the fish began to struggle, threw the bird off balance, and caused it to fly into a utility wire. In an irony of nature, the prey survived its predator by a few moments. The two animals weren't wasted, though. I gave the specimens to an educational institution which will have them mounted as they appeared during their last moments alive.—WCO Joe Carlos, Driftwood.



## Hot Spot

For the seventh consecutive year I've seen a grouse drumming on the same log. I see the log four or five mornings a week, year round. I can tell when the drumming season begins, because when it does there's a grouse on that log every morning without fail. Even heavy rains don't deter him. I don't know if it's the log or the location, but something obviously works.—LMO Jerry Becker, DuBois.

## 1-800-. . .

**CLEARFIELD COUNTY**—Now that the hunting seasons are starting, please remember to use our new regional toll free (800) numbers to contact us. Also, although this new system will improve communications, it will probably take a while to get all the bugs worked out. So, please be patient, too.—WCO Colleen M. Shannon, Luthersburg.

## Big Problem

**WAYNE COUNTY**—Despite the increasing influx of people and development in this region, many species of wildlife that are rare throughout most of the state are still fairly common here. Bald eagles, ospreys and river otters are notable examples, and it's interesting to note that each of those is dependent on wetlands, something else that is still relatively common here. Although people are quick to drain or fill marshes and swamps, nature makes very good use of them. I'm just afraid that someday we will lose our wetlands, before we even fully know what it is we lost.—WCO Donald R. Schauer, Honesdale.

## Guilty

It's been my experience that hunters are often falsely accused for such things as leaving gates open, driving ATVs on private land, and destroying property. In many instances it's not hunters who are responsible for such acts. A couple of months ago, however, I received an eyewitness account that unquestionably involved two hunters. Mr. Chisolm and Mr. Burnett were clearly responsible for cleaning up and hauling away all the litter on a parking lot on SGL 130. Thanks, gentlemen.—LMO James Deniker, Sandy Lake.



## On the Right Track

**TIOGA COUNTY**—I was discussing outdoor survival at a hunter education course and asked what a hunter should carry to help him survive if he gets lost. One girl quickly responded, “matches.” I then asked her what kind of matches and she replied, “the kind that are fire-proof.”—WCO Steve Gehringer, Mansfield.

## Popular Mix

**YORK COUNTY**—The seed mix we sell for planting wildlife food plots is getting popular. The owner of a local feed and seed store asked me for the ingredients because so many customers had asked him about the mix, and one landowner asked me for enough to plant 15 acres. I referred him to our region office.—WCO Robert L. Yeakel, Red Lion.

## Odd Couple

**BUCKS COUNTY**—About a year ago I wrote a Field Note about the pairing of a male wood duck and a hen mallard, and the unfortunate fact that their nest in a hollow tree was destroyed by a house cat. Well, the pair got together this year, but they’re nesting the mallard’s way—on the ground. Let’s keep our fingers crossed and hope for better success this time around.—WCO Cheryl A. Trewella.

## Double Duty

**WESTMORELAND COUNTY**—In order to carry a firearm, every wildlife conservation officer must participate in three shoots a year—a qualifying shoot, a foul weather shoot, and a shotgun shoot. At our last foul weather shoot, held in Somerset County last March, when, appropriately enough, five inches of snow covered the ground and the wind chill was -2 degrees F, I discovered another benefit of muff-type ear protectors. They not only reduce noise levels, they also keep your ears warm.—WCO Daniel L. Neideigh, Greensburg.

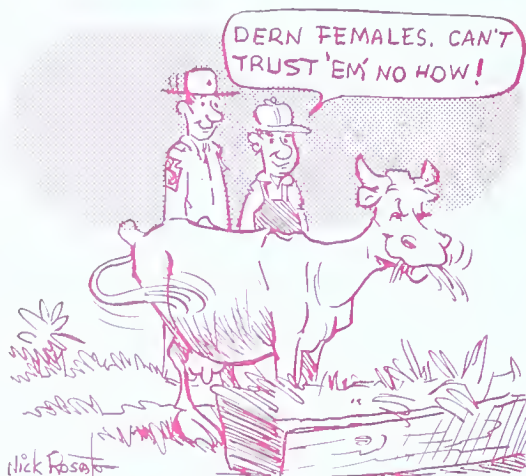


## Once Over

**SOMERSET COUNTY**—I must have slept in an awkward position because my back hurt, and traversing the mountain roads on the opening of small game season didn’t help. While patrolling I encountered Doc Ridinger and his hunting companion, who stands well over six feet and weighs nearly 270 pounds. While we were talking I mentioned to Doc, who’s a retired chiropractor, about my back. Doc said he’d be glad to help. He lowered the tailgate on his pickup and asked me to lie down—remember, I was in full uniform. So I was lying there, Doc was working over my back, the big guy was looking on, and a car full of people came by. I don’t know what the occupants thought, whether I was getting what I “deserved,” or whether the big guy was just too much to tangle with. Who knows? The car just slowed down momentarily and then sped away. Anyway, my back was much better and I finished the day in comfort.—WCO Daniel W. Jenkins, Somerset.

## Good Indications

**ELK COUNTY**—While checking hunters and listening for gobblers last spring, I heard more grouse drumming than ever before. If things work out, we should have a banner hunting season this fall.—WCO H. Harshbarger, St. Marys.



### False Accusation

**CLARION COUNTY**—The farmer was frantic, a bear had just made off with his newborn calf. I arrived just as the veterinarian finished examining the mother. Her calf wasn't missing, it hadn't been born yet. By now, I assume, mom and her calf are doing just fine. —WCO James Egly, Knox.

### Don't Get Caught

**BEDFORD COUNTY**—The plans are all set, the car's packed, and you're ready for bed, anxious to get an early start for that dream hunt of a lifetime. Then you suddenly remember you need a hunter education card. A frantic call to the wildlife conservation officer and you learn there are no exceptions: Nobody is issued a card who hasn't taken the course. Don't let yourself get caught in such a predicament. If you're going to hunt in another state, make certain you fulfill their requirements before you leave. —WCO R. Jim Trombetta, Woodbury.

### Satisfying

**POTTER COUNTY**—For several weeks last spring a golden eagle feasted on roadkilled deer I had placed in an isolated area. Everything went well until bears found the stash and hauled the carcasses away. Even though, the roadkills don't seem like such a waste when they're utilized by other wildlife. —WCO Ed Clark, Austin.

### Passing the Blame

**WESTMORELAND COUNTY**—Every spring wildlife officers collect deer jaws and reproductive data from roadkilled does, which the biologists use to help determine whitetail birth rates for each county. Much of this information is collected by deputies. Well, several days after Deputy Jesse Sims dropped off several jaws, my wife and I noticed a strange aroma coming from our living room, which also serves as my office. After two days of looking we found—you guessed it—a deer jaw under a sofa cushion. My wife wasn't too pleased, but I blamed the entire incident on Deputy Sims. —WCO R.D. Hixson, Ligonier.

### Busy Builder

**ADAMS COUNTY**—Walter Sell, Gettysburg, has built over 250 bluebird boxes over the last two years and attached them, with landowner permission, to fence posts throughout the area. —WCO Larry Haynes, Gettysburg.

### Hard Workers

Throughout the state the Game Commission is enjoying the services of people employed through the Pennsylvania Conservation Corps, a program similar to the old CCC program. In just three weeks my PCC crew planted 50,000 seedlings, built a tool locker, and improved some waterfowl habitat. —LMO Don Garner, James Creek.

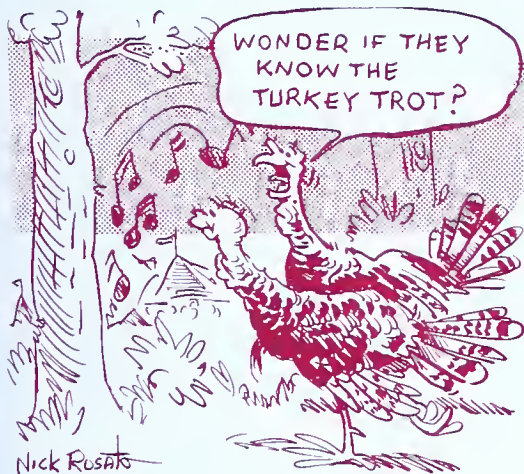
### Anxious Dog

**SOMERSET COUNTY**—With our hardy pheasants and two consecutive mild winters, we're seeing more ring-necks around here. You'd think everybody would be pleased, but I did get one call from a guy who wanted me to trap and transfer a couple of the birds because they were causing his dogs to bark. —WCO Clifford E. Guindon, Boswell.



## Lots of Birds

**BRADFORD COUNTY**—A hunter recently told me that he saw more turkeys last spring than most people see in a lifetime.—WCO A. Dean Rockwell, Sayre.



## Doesn't Everybody?

**BEAVER COUNTY**—Every spring the county conservation district holds a Maple Syrup Festival. Attractions normally include pancakes and sausage, arts and crafts, and live music. This year, however, there was an added attraction. Two wild turkeys came in and mingled with hundreds of folks. They even went within 10 feet of the band. I suspect that the birds were raised by a nearby farmer who salvaged the eggs from a destroyed nest. That would account for the birds associating with people, anyway, but I can't figure out where they acquired their love of country western music.—WCO Steven M. Spangler, Beaver.

## Well Behaved

**JUNIATA COUNTY**—Last May a 275-pound bear was killed by a train between Thompston town and Millerstown. The bear had no ear tags. Based on reports I received, I think he moved into the county on his own about five years ago and took up residence on Tuscarora Mountain. He caused no problems or even nuisances. We'll miss him.—WCO Dan Clark, Honey Grove.

## Improving

**CRAWFORD COUNTY**—Spring turkey hunting sure has changed here. Just a few years ago I couldn't find a hunter or a bird, but in recent seasons, particularly this past one, I've checked a lot of hunters and heard of many birds being taken. The agency's trap and transfer program is certainly paying big dividends in this corner of the state.—WCO Dave Myers, Linesville.

## Running Slow

**WASHINGTON COUNTY**—It's not unusual to find deer still carrying antlers in late December or January, but this year I picked up a roadkilled 4-point on March 17. The deer appeared to be in good condition, but his biological clock was obviously not keeping good time.—WCO Regis F. Senko, Washington.



## Probably Good

While teaching my two sons, Jason, age 6, and Stephen, age 4, how to imitate a barred owl call, I showed them how to get the proper rhythm by imitating the phrase "Who cooks for you, who cooks for you all." The boys learned it quickly because we got an almost immediate response. Very clearly, from the kitchen window came, "I cook for you. I cook for you all." Now the boys are wondering how good Mom's turkey calling will be.—LMO Barry S. Zaffuto, Ebensburg.

## Where?

**POTTER COUNTY**—Although this county is normally associated with deer, bear and turkey, we're seeing a big increase in waterfowl. I attribute this to the many nesting devices being erected on private and public land here. So watch out Middle Creek and Pymatuning, our condo's are bringing waterfowl to "God's County."—WCO Ron Clouser, Galeton.

## Second Class Housing

About 80 percent of the 300 wood duck nest boxes at Pymatuning are used by woodies. Apparently, however, we could use a few more. Last spring there were at least two instances where wood ducks nested in kestrel boxes, which are mounted high on telephone poles out in open fields—hardly waterfowl habitat, but I guess nobody's told the woodies that yet.—LMO Keith Harbaugh, Meadville.



## Opportunistic

**BEDFORD COUNTY**—For several years a local beekeeper avoided bear problems simply by placing his hives on building roofs and bear-proof platforms. Last spring, however, he slipped up. He left a ladder leaning against one of his buildings for just one night. Quickly taking advantage of the opportunity, a local bruin scaled the ladder just high enough to swat a hive off the roof for a midnight snack.—WCO Tim Flanigan, Manns Choice.

## SKIP It

**SCHUYLKILL COUNTY**—Local sportsmen's groups and other civic organizations have launched a new program to clean up litter. Modeled after the Fish Commission's "Adopt a Stream" program, in which groups and individuals assume responsibility for keeping sections of streams litter free, the groups here are cleaning up litter from roadsides. Their motto is SKIP—Schuylkill County, Keep It Pretty. Let's give them a hand.—WCO John C. Shutkufski, Pottsville.

## And Enjoyable

**ARMSTRONG COUNTY**—Farm-Game Cooperator Doyle Fulton recently told me about four hunters he found on his property last year. He came upon them as they were having lunch and, because he had been finding litter on his farm, he asked the group to please take their cans and paper with them. Doyle checked the area later and found that the sportsmen took not just their own litter, but all the other litter, too. Whoever you four sportsmen were, Doyle is grateful and so am I. Guys like you make my job much easier.—WCO Al Scott, Rural Valley.

## Got It Backwards

**SCHUYLKILL COUNTY**—A mother bear and her cub were causing problems in the Tamaqua area, and trapping them was a problem because we had to get them both. We brought in the standard culvert trap for the mother and a smaller, experimental trap for the cub. Two nights later we caught the cub in the large trap and the next morning we caught the mother in—you guessed it—the small trap. She really tore up the inside of the little trap, but it held together, and we were able to release them both in an area more suited for bears.—WCO John Denchak, Tamaqua.





**SUPERINTENDENT BILL HUDSON**, right, welcomed the 20th class of Pennsylvania Game Commission trainees. They started class last June. Over the course of the nine-month program the students will be taught a wide variety of subjects to prepare them for careers as wildlife conservation officers.

## 20th Class Begins Training

**T**HE PENNSYLVANIA Game Commission has selected 27 men and two women for the 20th class of wildlife conservation officer trainees.

They were chosen from approximately 1200 applicants, following a rigid series of written, oral and physical examinations. Those who successfully complete the required 37 weeks of intensive training will be assigned to fill positions vacated through retirements, promotions and resignations.

Twelve trainees served as deputy wildlife conservation officers, and two as deputy waterways conservation officers; 21 are married and 16 are veterans. The average age of the class is 32.

Five of the trainees come from the northwest part of the state, three from the southwest, five from the northcentral, five from the southcentral, seven from the northeast, and four from the southeast.

### First Class

The group will be the first class of officers trained at the Game Commission's relocated Ross Leffler School of Conservation, now an integral part of the agency's new central headquarters complex in Harrisburg. Trainees reported to the school Sunday, June 5.

Subjects covered during the rigorous nine-month curriculum include wildlife management; media and public relations; laws governing wildlife and fish; conservation information and educa-



tion; legal procedures; bird and mammal identification; firearms training; unarmed self-defense and habitat management practices.

In addition to academic classroom training, trainees will be assigned to work with field personnel during periods of peak hunting activity, late fall and early winter. Following graduation on March 4, 1989, trainees will be commissioned and assigned as wildlife conservation officers throughout the state.

Members of the new class, along with their hometowns and counties, follow: David E. Beinhaur, Liverpool, Perry; Jerry A. Bish, Templeton, Armstrong; Donald R. Burchell, New Milford, Susquehanna; Douglas C. Carney, Evans City, Butler; Timothy Conway, Gouldsboro, Monroe; Donald R. Daugherty, Jr., Erie, Erie; David W. Donachy, St. Marys, Elk; Keith A. Falasco, Sharps-

ville, Mercer; John B. Farster, Oil City, Venango; Debra A. Fronefield, Bethlehem, Lehigh; Stephen S. Hower, Millerstown, Perry; Richard E. Karper, Gardners, Cumberland; Richard P. Larnerd, Montrose, Susquehanna; Scott J. Lorow, Muncy Valley, Sullivan; John A. Morack, Mount Carmel, Northumberland; Robert W. Norbeck, Pine Glen, Centre; Michael G. Ondik, State College, Centre; Kenneth J. Packard, Tioga, Tioga; Ronald L. Powell, Hadley, Mercer; William C. Ragosta, Bellefonte, Centre; Robert W. Reich, Lititz, Lancaster; Larry M. Smith, Aliquippa, Beaver; Timothy F. Smith, Hanover, Adams; Keith A. Snyder, Selinsgrove, Snyder; Linda L. Spotts, Bushkill, Monroe; Edward B. Steffan, Harrisburg, Dauphin; Joseph V. Stefko, Jr., Greensburg, Westmoreland; Paul G. Surgent, Scranton, Lackawanna; James A. Wilson, Pen Argyl, Northampton.

## Deer Scents, Lures and Tagging Rules

**M**ANY HUNTERS have asked about provisions in the new Game and Wildlife Code concerning deer scents, lures and tagging rules.

J. R. Fagan, director of the Game Commission's law enforcement bureau, says the new code stipulates, "It is unlawful to . . . use . . . any artificial or natural bait, hay, grain, fruit, nut, salt, chemical, mineral or other food as an enticement for game or wildlife . . . or take advantage of any such area or food or bait . . ." while hunting.

"This is meant to prevent a hunter from taking advantage of any edible substances or materials to attract wildlife," he says. "Those who place apples, bread, corn, suet, salt blocks, etc. to entice wildlife to a specific area are violating the spirit, intent and letter of the law.

"To do so causes wildlife to deviate

from normal feeding and travel patterns; it's altering the usual feeding behavior of wildlife. It's using an attractant to 'pull in' wildlife to areas they ordinarily wouldn't frequent. That's unlawful.

"On the other hand, it isn't the intent of the new code to prohibit the use of the commercial scents and lures being marketed today. Some of these mask or camouflage human scents, and there is nothing illegal about them. Baiting basically refers to the use of food, not odors or other sensory attractants.

Fagan went on to explain: "Deer lures and scents do not pose a threat to the management of our deer herds. At some future time, a lure may be developed which could cause deer to lose wariness to man and danger, making the whitetail an easy target. That could upset our deer management program. If that happens, it will certainly be addressed.



Until then, lures and scents are legal to use."

Fagan points out that the intent and spirit of the law are important. "It's sometimes difficult to precisely spell out and cover every hypothetical situation, so our laws are constructed in a manner which permit or prohibit conduct consistent with the intentions of lawmakers.

"For example, the new wording on 'baiting' is intended to prevent hunters from taking unfair advantage of wildlife; from attracting wildlife to a location it generally wouldn't visit; from inducing wildlife to go out of its way to a spot it usually doesn't frequent. This is illegal."

Fagan says the Code prohibits "taking advantage of any such area or bait prior to 30 days after the removal of such material and its residue. If any person wishes to hunt in an area that has or had bait or food, everything must be removed 30 days prior to hunting that area, and the Commission can post the area against hunting for a period of 30 days."

He further explains, "The word 'artificial' in the new Wildlife Code differs from the old Game Law. When the Game Law was written in 1937, plastic and other artificial corn wasn't manufactured. Today, it is, and it attracts flying waterfowl.

"But the use of so-called 'quack corn' is unlawful—it's impossible for ducks and geese to distinguish it from real corn, which has been outlawed as a bait



for waterfowl hunting under federal regulations for many years."

On the rumors circulating regarding tagging of wildlife, particularly deer, Fagan says, "There are no really important changes from the past. It has been rumored a hunter can't drag a deer unless it has that individual hunter's tag on it; that all successful hunters must accompany their tagged deer; that a hunter can't 'possess' a tagged deer belonging to another person; that a hunter can't drive a pickup loaded with legally harvested and tagged deer unless the owners of the deer accompany the truck; and that a hunter can't give away a tagged but unwanted deer to another person. Not one of those is true.

"As was the case previously, a hunter may not possess a big game tag in the fields, forests or on the waters and highways in the state after having killed the legal limit of big game (deer, bear or turkey). But as long as the big game is properly harvested and tagged, there is no prohibition against transporting it," Fagan concluded.

## 37,239 Roadkills in 1987

ACCORDING to Game Commission tabulations, 37,239 deer were killed on state roads last year, an increase of more than 15 percent over the previous year's record, 32,005, and a jump of over 40 percent from the 1985 figure.

Leading counties in recorded highway kills were Westmoreland, 1390; Luzerne, 1380; Bucks, 1158; and Clearfield, 1118.

Vehicle-killed bears also increased in

1987. Last year, 166 bears died on highways, up from 140 in 1986 and 90 in 1985.

Known out-of-season deer mortality for the year totaled 44,254, including 4145 taken illegally, 1662 for crop damage and 401 by dogs. Wildlife conservation officers recorded 247 bears lost out-of-season, including 32 killed illegally, 38 for crop damage and one killed by dogs.



| DEER (SYMBOL - D) | BEAR (SYMBOL - B) |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| HIGHWAY           | 37,239            |
| ILLEGALS          | 4,145             |
| CROP DAMAGE       | 1,662             |
| OOGS              | 401               |
| OTHER             | 807               |
|                   | 166               |
|                   | 32                |
|                   | 38                |
|                   | 1                 |
|                   | 10                |



# "Dumbling"

**E**XPERT HUNTERS, those to whom every game trophy is the result of flawless planning, perfect performance and just plain superior skill, exist only in outdoor magazines and cunningly edited videos. I have a large circle of hunting acquaintances and none of them are experts. Of course, we all vary in our hunting experience, talents and successes, and we differ in how hard or how seriously we hunt. We are all sure to brag it up when the trophy we take is the result of our flawless planning, perfect performance or just plain superior skill. However, that doesn't happen very often. More times than we'll admit, we "dumble" into the game we get.

I'm not sure who first used the term "dumbling" to describe getting game by "nothing but pure, dumb stumbling luck." Around here, at least, the term has stuck. Afterall, "dumbling" into game is something we've all done, or would like to, at least once in a while.

We put long hours into preparation, scouting and the hunt itself. We devote all our energy, attention, patience and intelligence. We deserve a trophy animal. But no one shoots game by deserving it alone. Effort expended is no guarantee of a monster buck or slammer gobbler, or even of a spindly spike or reedy-voiced jake. There's still luck, chance, happenstance which allows the least likely hunter to "dumble" into the prize of a lifetime, or permits the expert hunter to get his trophy in an unexpected manner, place and time. "Dumbling" into game may not be the way we hope to get it, but there are none of us—or darned few—that will turn down an opportunity.

I "dumbled" into my Pennsylvania deer last year, a fat archery season doe. I'm not apologetic because there have been many other bow seasons I hunted diligently and went deerless, so I was due a "dumble." Prior to the season I scouted and chose an excellent stand at a muddied trail intersection. I spent as

many hours as I could the first week in my tree stand, braving the mosquitoes and feeling worthy of a good whitetail.

But I didn't get one there. I "dumbled" into the doe one hot afternoon on the way back to my van. I had simply taken a midday walk with my bow to explore a Game Lands that was new to me. By every rule of hunting fairness, I shouldn't have gotten a shot. I didn't know the area, I was walking along the path, kicking pebbles, talking loudly to my companion. My camo headnet was off, I was twirling my shooting tab around my fingertip, my arrows were all in the quiver.

## Miraculously

But there she was, munching crab-apples under the thorny trees just this side of the parking lot gate. She saw me when I saw her, so there was no chance and nowhere for me to hide. There was nothing I could do but stand in the open, fumble for a broadhead, and hope she wouldn't bolt. Miraculously, she stood and the arrow connected. Instead of running straight away, the deer made a semicircle around the parking lot and fell dead within 50 yards of the van. I could have driven up a grassy lane right to her, but dragged her out instead. Afterall, I'd had enough "dumbling" prosperity for one day.

When a hunter hears about another "dumbling" into game, what he feels mainly is the irony of it all. His attitude lies somewhere between a resentful

## Another View...

by Linda Steiner

"there's just no justice" and an envious "some people have all the luck." It seems most unfair when those who have had little hunting experience, who have not yet put enough of their (often literal) blood and sweat into the sport, get the trophy we feel we have earned. But it helps to remember that if the "dumbler" keeps on hunting, in time he'll pay it all back.

My brother Len is able to combine both skill and luck to take a buck nearly every year. Sometimes it's mostly hunting skill that fills the tag, at other times it's inspired "dumblng." I mean that in a flattering way and I wish the ability had been passed through the family genes. His biggest buck, and one of the largest shot by anyone I know personally, he "dumbled" into. Or perhaps it was just proof that occasionally, good things happen to good people.

After Len got a buck his first gun season, a number of his buddies pre-

vailed on him to take them to his spot the next year. Len ended up in the role of host/guide. He knew he'd be the one to take the heat if no one got a shot. So he did the scouting and selected his friends' opening hour stands, places he would have chosen as his own best bets for a buck.

Dropping each hunter off at his stand opening morning, Len suddenly found himself far out the ridge at starting time, with nowhere in particular to post. At that point, with the guns beginning, he decided he'd better find a comfortable log and sit down, anywhere.

Len hadn't been sitting long before he heard crashing in the brush to one side. Swinging around, he caught a glimpse of deer and antlers. They looked like big spikes through the branches. Len fired, the deer disappeared over the hill, and then all was quiet. When he went over to look for a hit, he spotted the buck lying dead on

## **GAMEcooking Tips**

### **New Orleans Red Beans and Rice**

We always include this dish on a buffet table. It's typical Louisiana fare—the South's answer to Italian pasta or Pennsylvania Dutch pot pie, and just as good. This is also a different way to use venison sausage. To prepare this hearty meal, plan ahead because the beans must be soaked overnight and the ham hocks should be simmered for 4 to 5 hours.

- 1 pound dried red kidney beans (2 cups)
- 2½ quarts water
- 2 ham hocks
- ½ pound venison sausage (hot Italian style, preferred)
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 teaspoon chili powder or Creole Seasoning (available in cooking shops)
- 1 cup long-grained rice, uncooked

Wash beans and pick over. Soak overnight in 1 quart water. Drain. Add another 1½ quarts water to the beans and place in a slow cooker. Trim all fat and skin off the ham hocks. Add whole ham hocks to the beans and simmer 4 to 5 hours, or until meat is falling off the bone and beans are tender. Remove hocks from the pot and allow to cool. Cut the sausage into small pieces and add to beans. Add the remaining ingredients and simmer another hour. In the meantime, cook the rice according to package directions. Remove the meat from the ham hocks and add to the pot. Cook until beans can be mashed into the stew and the mixture is thick. Serve over hot rice. Serves 6.

—FROM WILD GAME COOKERY  
BY CAROL VANCE WARY



**NONE OF US** knows when we might next “dumble” into a trophy. It could be the day we sleep late and don’t get into the woods until mid-morning.

its side a short distance away. But it looked strange. Its head was high off the ground.

It should have been, because that head was supported by a wide-spreading, long-tined, bone-white, nearly perfect 8-point rack. Len had seen only the foot-long brow tines when he shot. The buck was the biggest that had been and probably will be shot on that steep, rocky piece of public land for many years. If a hunter gets a chance to “dumble,” why be modest?

I told Len afterwards to appreciate his “easy” deer, taken early in his hunting career. I knew he would eventually pay for it in tough, fruitless hunts during the years to come. Today he believes me. In the long run, maybe we do deserve the ones we “dumble” into.

None of us knows when we’ll next “dumble” into a game trophy. It might be the day we sleep late and don’t get into the woods until mid-morning. It may be during the ten minutes we hunt just off the road on the way to work. It could be when we take a wrong turn on the highway and decide to hunt there anyway, or perhaps when we “wimp out”



and walk back to the car to get warm. Instead of getting that buck pool breaker with expert planning, perfect performance and superior skill, we find we’ve taken it on a notion of the moment, practically by accident, when we, by all rights, shouldn’t have. But let’s not frown on good fortune. “Dumbling” into success is an option I wouldn’t want the sport to lose.

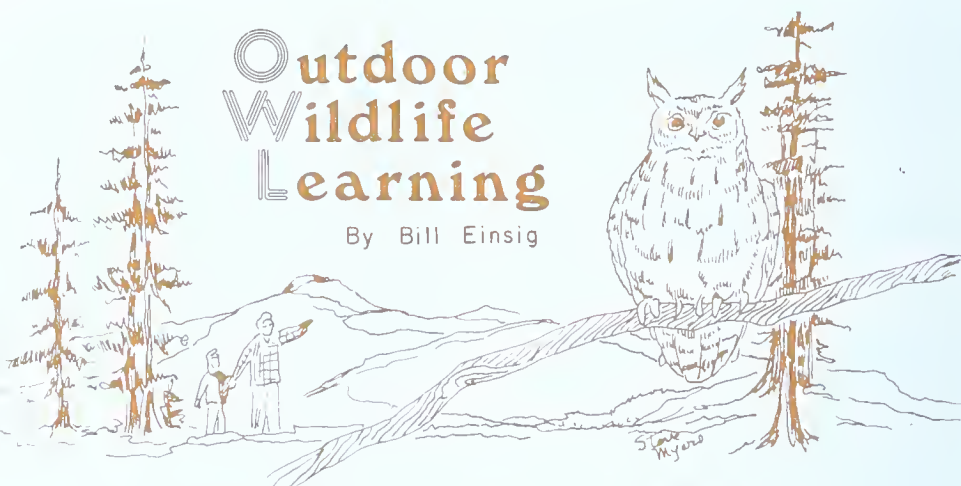
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**RURAL VALLEY** Cub Scout Troop 174 recently presented bluebird boxes they made to WCO Alan Scott, Armstrong County. Pictured are Cub Scouts Charlie Young, Shawn Otto, Shawn Cessna, Chris Lewis, Doug Smulik, Keith DiMaio, Shawn Powers and Joshua Schrecengost, and Cubmaster Robin Young and WCO Al Scott.



# Outdoor Wildlife Learning

By Bill Einsig



## Aquatic Project Wild

**S**EVERAL years ago the Game Commission brought Project Wild into Pennsylvania. Since then this collection of teaching activities has reached hundreds of schools and thousands of students, giving them fundamental instruction on wild species and their needs. The activities in PW are novel, exciting and practical and have been readily accepted by teachers looking for new ways to approach the study of wildlife.

PW activities have focused on land-based species—birds and mammals living in the fields and forests across North America. For most of us, “wildlife” seems to refer first to these hairy and feathered terrestrial critters. But, of course, there are many species that do not live on land as we do.

Aquatic areas of all types have been under extreme stress in recent decades, mostly as a result of man's activities. We've come to depend on bodies of water for our own water supply, for irrigation, for electric power and, unfortunately, for disposal of our wastes. The earth's lakes, rivers and even oceans have become giant sewerage for human progress.

As a result, the quality of our water resources has deteriorated, limiting our own use of this vital, life-sustaining fluid, and also changing, or destroying the habitat for countless aquatic wildlife species.

Just think for a moment of the environmental problems we now face or read about each day: waste treatment facilities stretched to the limit, nutrient loading of the mighty Chesapeake Bay, off-shore dumping, beaches, lakes, and river sections closed to swimming and fishing,

aquifers tainted with toxins. As aquatic regions are stressed, so are the animals that live in them. Perhaps because they are out of sight, aquatic species are also out of mind.

### Aquatic Project Wild

Meeting the challenge of aquatic environmental issues begins with basic understanding of aquatic habitats and the problems they face. That's exactly the thrust of the new Aquatic Project Wild.

This manual offers a wealth of supplementary activities and supporting information. It contains 40 new activities and a list of suggestions for modifying 82 original PW lessons to focus on aquatics.

Appendices comprise about a quarter of the new manual. They include the usual curriculum framework, cross-references and glossary found in the original PW but rewritten for aquatics. New sections include brief primers that teachers will find helpful: tips on using guided imagery and simulations with kids, how to set up and maintain a classroom aquarium, and how to establish ethical ways of visiting private land and of collecting specimens with little harm to critters and habitats.

### Previews!!

#### Are You Me?

In this activity for primary grades, young students match pictures of adult animals and their young. Four pages in the manual contain pairs of pictures for twenty species of aquatic critters. The



teacher simply copies the pages, cuts them apart and is ready to go!

## **Whale of a Tail**

How would you like to draw a life-size whale on your school playground? Aquatic PW tells you how! First, students draw a whale on one-inch graph paper. Then they transfer the drawing, one block at a time, to a 10-foot grid drawn on the playground. The activity gives complete directions, actual whale sizes, and activities to use after the whale is drawn.

## **Migration Headache**

Students become waterfowl migrating from nesting to wintering habitat in this active game. Paper plates represent wetland habitats at opposite ends of a large play area.

The "birds" migrate on signal and attempt to find adequate habitat space. Actually, each student must be able to get one foot on a paper plate.

Of course, things happen to change the quality and quantity of each habitat. In some years, the habitat shrinks due to pollution or human development. In other years, restoration efforts actually improve the habitat so that more birds survive and more nests are successful. Kids will enjoy this game and will readily understand the cause-and-effect lesson it teaches.

## **Puddle Wonders!**

Rain puddles are the subject of this unusual lesson that could be done almost anywhere. Students survey the school grounds before a rain to predict where puddles are likely to form. They also survey the animal species that live in the area of the potential puddle. Then, just after a heavy rain, students check their predictions and study the puddles in some detail. Many such puddles are used by wild species that leave tracks, feathers or droppings behind. Interesting idea.

## **Watershed**

Many school campuses have a sloped area where water drains to a common outlet. This might be a bank along a driveway or athletic field, or perhaps a swale designed to handle storm water. Such an area is used in this lesson to illustrate the concept of a watershed. Students map it,

measure it, calculate the volume of water that flows over it, and predict what would happen if it was managed in different ways.

## **Deadly Waters**

Water pollution is often difficult to work with directly with younger students. Not every school has a nearby polluted stream to study. In this simulation, students sample a hypothetical river contaminated by ten different pollutants. The river is a container of multi-colored paper-punch tokens and "sampling" is done with a  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon measure. Each color token represents a different pollutant which students have to identify. Levels of each pollutant are graphed by simply gluing the tokens onto graph paper to form a bar graph.

## **Turtle Hurdles**

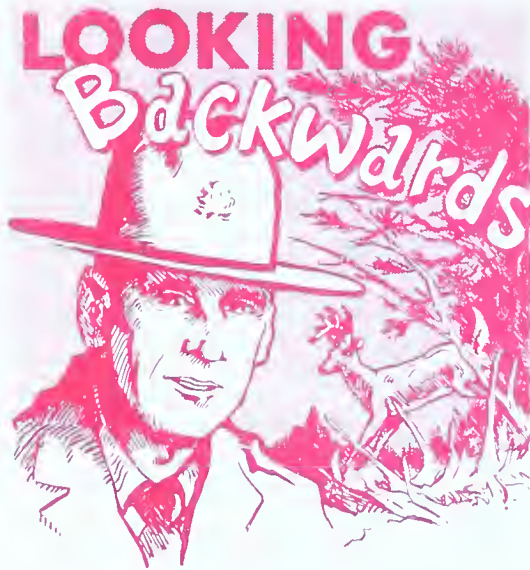
This very active simulation has students playing the roles of sea turtles and their predators. Turtles have to hatch, cross the beach, mature during ten years at sea, and finally return to the beach to reproduce. Students who complete the perilous odyssey are the survivors. While some students are sea turtles, other students are predators bent on having sea turtles for lunch.

This is perhaps one of the most complicated games of its kind and is definitely designed for older students. There are a number of rules to remember and most are difficult for the teacher to enforce because so many actions are going on at the same time.

Still, the idea is exciting and it simulates the plight of the sea turtle in a very teachable way. One aspect that's particularly clever is that dead turtles become condominiums sitting shoulder-to-shoulder on the beach and, perhaps, blocking the path of surviving turtles to their nest sites.

## **Get on the List!!**

The Pennsylvania Fish Commission will distribute the new aquatic materials through workshops tentatively scheduled for spring, 1989. Contact their Aquatic Educator, PFC, P.O. Box 1673, Harrisburg, PA 17105-1673 for more specific information on PFC's distribution plan and workshop schedule.



**By Bill Bower**  
Wildlife Conservation Officer  
Bradford County

HERE IN THE "North Woods," a favorite pastime for some people is to have what is called a "venison roast." Now that's not unusual, except some of these roasts are made with illegal venison. Usually, a couple of guys will organize the party and also provide the main course. Then they simply spread the word, venison roast at such and such a place on Saturday night. Most of these parties are at an out-of-the-way place, and beer and liquor flow freely. There are many invited guests and sometimes some uninvited ones. Of course, no one would invite a game protector to any of these parties, but a lot of times we like to go, anyway — uninvited. I want to tell you about two such parties.

The first one occurred around 1980. It was getting close to archery season and, like other years, there was some illegal activity going on. It was about that time I heard there was going to be a venison roast on the following Saturday night. I had planned to be working that night, but this sounded like a party I just had to attend.

I went by the area and, sure enough, there was a party going on. Being a wise game protector, I wanted to thoroughly investigate the situation before acting. I had a deputy drop me off, and under the cover

of darkness, I crept through the woods for a peek at the action. It was the usual type of party with nothing out of the ordinary and no indication they were eating illegal venison.

After about 15 minutes I started thinking about leaving, but then somebody said, "Boy, this is the best stuff I've ever tasted. And don't worry, I won't tell the Game Warden."

Bingo!

Now I knew they were serving illegal deer meat. It was all I could do to keep from standing up and saying to the guy that he just had, but I knew better. The first thing I needed to do was get some help. Walking into an illegal venison roast, alone, when the beer is running freely, is just not the smartest thing in the world for an officer to do. I recognized most of the people there, and knew they would not normally create a problem; but when there is "firewater," I take no chances.

I crept away from the scene and headed for the nearest phone. I called Deputy Jerry Ross and Land Manager Chet Harris. I knew it would take them approximately an hour to get there. In the meantime, the deputy and I went back to watch the activity at the party.

After a long hour, Ross and Harris arrived. I filled them in on what I had and what to expect. We drove up to the party in two vehicles.

Uninvited guests are usually not welcome. Neither are four uniformed Game Protectors when it's an illegal venison roast. Most of the food had been consumed by the time we arrived, but there was still a pot on the fireplace, being kept warm over the hot coals. I announced, "We're state officers. We have information you are possessing illegal deer meat. Whose party is this?"

"Not us. No deer meat here!"

Chet Harris walked over to the fire, took the lid off the pot, and smelled the meat. "If this isn't venison, I've never smelled venison," said Chet.

The two men who were holding the party came forward. "What do you think you're doing, ruining our party? This is private property, we demand that you leave right now!"

"We won't be leaving until we're ready," I said. Now, how did you get this meat?"

"It's none of your business," came a response.

"Okay, Jerry, help me get everyone's name and address."



"Hey, leave those people alone. They're our guests!"

"Yeah, I know. But when we get to court I want to be able to testify as to who was here," I explained.

"Now wait a minute! These people have done nothing wrong, and neither have we."

"Well then, answer the questions. Where did you get the meat?"

"I killed it last hunting season," one man said.

When did you kill it?" I asked.

"First day of buck season."

"Where?"

"Armenia Mountain."

"Did you report your kill to Harrisburg?"

"Sure did!"

Okay. We won't have a problem checking that out. Do you know you're not allowed to keep deer from one license year to the next?"

"No, I didn't know that."

The deputies were still taking names and addresses. I finished interviewing the two men. We took the meat that was in the pot and told them I would be in touch.

The following Monday I contacted the man who said he had shot the deer and asked, "Do you still contend you killed that deer during the last hunting season?"

Sure do. I killed it the first day. It was a 4-point. I killed it on Armenia Mountain."

"Well, Harrisburg has no record of your kill."

"Well, I dropped the card in the mail box. I can't help it if they didn't receive it!"

"There's something funny here," I said.

"What's that?"

"It's hard for me to believe you killed a deer the first day of buck season last year."

"Why?"

"Well, last year you weren't even in the state. You were working in New Jersey. You didn't even purchase a Pennsylvania hunting license last year."

The man was quiet for some time before saying, "I don't think I should say any more until I see my lawyer."

I filed citations against the two men. They elected to have a hearing before the Justice of the Peace and were found guilty. Their lawyer appealed it to County Court. At the county level, the Judge found the one man guilty and the other one not guilty. The not guilty verdict was rendered on the grounds that I could not prove this man was aware that the deer was taken illegally.



There was no doubt in my mind he knew it was illegal. As a matter of fact, the information I had was that he was the one who had killed the deer.

Law enforcement officers do not win all the cases they take to court. Some defendants get off on technicalities. Some get off because the officer did not proceed right or was unable to prove his case beyond a reasonable doubt. They taught us in the training school to not worry about not guilty verdicts. If we've done your job, we've done all we could.

Actually, not guilty verdicts make a game protector better because the next time we're watching for loop holes and other legal pitfalls. We also learn what defense a defendant might use and what can be done to stop him. Not guilty verdicts are sometimes tough to take, but they're what makes veteran officers.

The second venison roast was much like the first one. The only thing different was that I didn't find out about it until the night of the party, when I received information that two men had shot and killed a deer in a particular field. They took it to the one's home and cut it up for the next night's party.

I checked the information out. Sure enough, a deer had been killed in that field. I had a description of the vehicle, and I knew the one man drove that type of vehicle. I went by the area and, just as I suspected, there was a party going on down in the woods. I was alone that time, too, so I again called Deputy Ross, Land Manager Harris, and Game Protector Rockwell. I waited until they finally arrived. We started walking down the lane to where the party was going on, trying not to use our lights so we could surprise them.

About halfway down the lane we saw a

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## GAME NEWS

For a Friend . . .

flashlight coming up. "Quick! Hide in the brush," I said. "Someone's coming."

We all jumped off the trail. When the light came by we noticed it was being carried by a woman who was accompanied by another woman and a child. They passed by without seeing any of us—any of us except Dean Rockwell. Dean's a rather big guy, and there simply wasn't any place for him to hide. (At least that's his excuse.) Anyway, the lady shined the light on Dean, who was trying to hide. When he saw he was caught Dean said, "Good evening, ladies."

"Good evening," they said.

"Nice night, isn't it?" replied Dean.

"Sure is."

The ladies then proceeded up the trail.

By their reactions, and the fact Dean was in full uniform, I got the sinking feeling that maybe there wasn't any illegal meat there. The ladies could have yelled or screamed out, but they didn't. There was nothing to do but go on down the lane.

When we got to the party, we were greeted with all kinds of remarks. The food was all gone at this party and just drinking was going on now. The vehicle which was supposed to have carried the deer was there. Checking around, we found hair and blood inside the vehicle, but nothing else. The participants at the party had been drinking quite heavily. The one guy came up to me. He said he was going to knock that big guy on his duff. He was referring to Chet Harris.

Now Chet's a pretty big guy, also, so I said, "You've been drinking too much, but if you're feeling that brave, go ahead and try." He walked over to Chet and looked up at him. I guess he didn't have enough "fire-water," because he changed his mind. All that time we were looking for meat, but we couldn't find any.

There was a dog there, but we hadn't paid too much attention to it because it wasn't mean. He was just there. But then someone noticed the dog was chewing on something.

I cautiously took a piece of meat from the dog, "Yep, it looks like deer meat," I said.

The men started to argue with us again. Then Jerry said, "The dog's got another piece of meat." We took it. Then we watched as the dog went into the weeds and came out carrying a big bone. "Here boy, give me that. Good dog."

"Hey, leave my dog alone."

"Fetch boy. Go get another piece. Follow him, Jerry! Watch where he goes."

Jerry followed the dog, and it wasn't long before we had all the evidence we needed.

Here again, I questioned the two men involved. They didn't cooperate, so we filed charges.

Hearings were held and appeals were taken, but it finally ended up with the two men pleading guilty if I would not charge anyone else at the party. I had no intention of doing that anyhow, simply because I wasn't able to prove they knew it was illegal meat. One thing I'm sure of is the women on the trail were not aware it was illegal meat.

I guess people get pretty upset when you're an uninvited guest, but then again, game protectors would be as lonely as that famous washing machine repairman if they were to wait for an invitation to an illegal venison roast.

### Cover Painting by Gerry Putt

Many consider the male wood duck to be the most attractive of all North American waterfowl. The wood duck also represents one of wildlife management's greatest accomplishments. Wood ducks were nearly extinct at the turn of the century because of habitat loss and unregulated hunting. Since then, though, thanks to sound timber management practices and the regulation of sport hunting, the species has become one of our most common.



# Thornapples



*Chuck Fergus*

BY THE TIME this column is printed I will be knee-deep in diapers, corn starch, formula, and a bassinet. My wife and I are expecting our first child, sometime around Independence Day. I'll admit it's a little daunting. I am challenging my mind with a lexicon of brand-new terms: "Apgar score," "layette," "colic," "receiving blanket." I am reading fewer novels these days and more books on child-rearing. From the latter I have gleaned certain Horrifying Facts (the average baby gets changed some 6000 times during its "diaper years"), most of which I have managed to block out of my mind.

We don't know whether the child is a boy or a girl. (I was astonished to find out that many parents-to-be learn the sex of their baby in the womb, after having certain tests done. It reminds me of when I snuck into the hall closet and found out two weeks before Christmas that I would be receiving Electric Football and an Etch-a-Sketch. They were exemplary toys, but I felt a little let down simply by knowing what I was going to get.)

Anyway (you hear it all the time, and it is utterly true), it doesn't matter to me whether the child is a boy or a girl, so long as it's healthy.

What follows is a letter to my unborn, unnamed, but-already-making-his-or-her-presence-felt child.

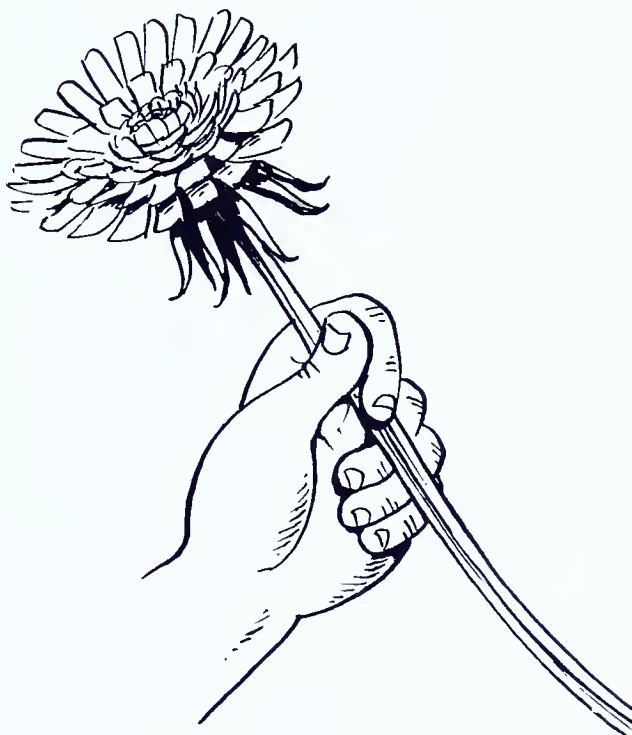
Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

This may be a useless exercise in view

of the fact that you cannot read, cannot understand English were someone to read it to you; but it is a sincere message, invested with love, and perhaps you'll read it some time in the future.

Welcome to the world. The world you will be entering, here on a wooded mountain in rural Pennsylvania, is a very different world from the ones other children will be entering in New York City or the Bolivian rainforest or the Maldive Islands or the Ukraine or Swaziland or Beijing or the Standing Rock Indian Reservation or Bern, Switzerland. The world you will be entering will be a different world from these, but also the same one.

And what a world! At first it will be vast and indefinable, a swirling kaleidoscope of color, motion, texture, smell, sound. A dandelion for you will not be the same as a dandelion for me. You will see lush, changing colors: yellow, maroon, sunlit gold and green. You'll see lovely ramifying shapes of veins, ribs, margins, stamens, petals (without, of course, knowing their names); you will smell a grass-faint sweetness, feel a soft, slight tackiness—probably you'll put



—DOUG PIFER

the thing in your mouth. (And drool it out again because it's bitter.) For me, that dandelion will be just a dandelion.

Long ago I lost—you might say I was forced to lose—your open-sensed wonder at the world. If we adults had never learned to screen out the vast majority of the messages constantly bombarding our senses, we no doubt would be even crazier than we are. But you, lacking words to define and dismiss these stimuli, have no choice but to blink amazed at each and every amazing thing.

It's something I hope you lose only in part: the capacity to be enthralled by nearly everything. And I hope to regain or at least to hold onto some of that capacity, through experiencing things with you. We'll spend a lot of time to-

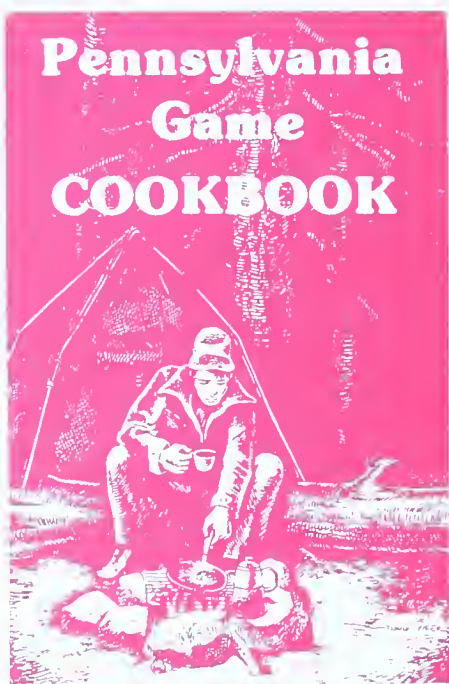
gether in fields and woods, on lakes and streams. I mean, really: What could possibly be more important than watching a red-winged blackbird perched on a cattail stem, with those blood-bright epaulets on his black shoulders? Then the bird rising, scolding, in the blue sky, a sky stippled with clouds, each edge-torn puff a world worth pondering itself. I can hardly wait; I want to learn again to really see: leaves and snails and turtles and moss, tracks in the mud and phoebe feathers.

As you get a bit older, we'll probably take up fishing. I recall as a child being fascinated by the idea of tossing a string into a murky course of water and hauling out splashing, flashing life. Well, that still sounds pretty amazing. And if the fish is a trout or a bass or a crappie, we may just take it home and eat it, and you'll learn an important lesson: for there to be life, there must be death.

I hope, as you are growing up, that we'll find plenty of places to fish and canoe and woods-walk and marsh-hop. Certainly we'll have the forest around our house, through which I've made several paths; and Wayne's ponds; and the lake on top of the mountain, with the bog at its upper end, where live beavers and electric-blue damselflies and waterbugs and wood ducks; and Spring Hollow with its pink lady's slippers and grouse and owls and deer. At each of these places there will be a veritable universe of things to experience, if only we take the time. And time is something I'll try to give you in generous amounts.

I don't doubt that I'll regale you, every so often, with stories about 'the way things used to be,' because things have changed quite a lot since I was a boy. Those days, we didn't worry as much about the environment (although we should have): the shrinking rainforest, the hole in the ozone layer, the greenhouse effect, the poisons accumulating in our soil. They are the *really* Horrifying Facts.

Around where we live and where you will grow up, the main change is that there's a lot less open land. The town where I grew up has tripled—perhaps



**Pennsylvania Game Cookbook** is a 96-page collection of delicious recipes submitted by **GAME NEWS** readers. It includes methods of preparing all kinds of game available in Pennsylvania, plus some recipes for moose, elk, and other species. \$4.00 delivered from **GAME NEWS** office.



quadrupled—in size. There are people there who talk a great deal about “growth” and “prosperity” and (a word you will likely come to dread as much as I do) “progress.” They are not evil people, but somehow they have gotten the notion that they are no longer part of the earth; that they stand above it. To them a street of houses has more value than a field of wild strawberries; a stream is something to shunt away safely in a culvert, rather than a place to catch salamanders and crayfish and trout. They would rather see four lanes of highway scarring a mountainside, than the series of seeps along the slope where grouse and turkeys pick up surprising bits of greenery on the coldest winter days (not that they even know that the grouse or turkeys or spring seeps exist; I will take you and show you, while we still have time).

### “Progress”

Maybe these people—the ones who extol “progress”—have learned to screen out the numberless wonders that appealed to their senses when they were young; or maybe they were never given a chance to experience those wonders in the first place. They seem to care only for the mundane, the here and now. They would rather pay less for electricity and have acid rain kill the fish in the lakes and streams. They would rather produce an excess of objects—many of which have little real value—than keep the soil and air and water pure. Really, they care not a whit for me, for you, or for the unborn coming after you. Not that I’m completely blameless in this regard: I try to buy but few things, recycle, conserve, live simply, but I know I use a lot of resources myself—a lot more than my grandfather ever consumed.

I suppose I’ll try to influence the way you live your life; I imagine every father tries to do this with his daughter or son. Somehow I think that if I set a good example, if I live simply, if I show you the natural world—if I take the time (and enjoyable it should be) to let you exercise your child’s sense of wonder, then you will gain a healthy respect for

nature and the environment, and for your place in it.

Hunting occupies a central part of my life; through hunting, I live out one aspect of my own personal religion. I read in an article somewhere about a father who said he didn’t care whether his unborn child was a boy or a girl, “as long as he or she is a deer hunter.” I understand his feeling. I plan to give you the opportunity—whether you are male or female—to hunt. My own parents didn’t hunt, but they never tried to discourage me from it. Remembering their



tolerance, I'll never force you to hunt. But I'll make sure you have the chance.

Those fish we'll catch, the grouse and woodcock Jenny and I will bring home now and then, the deer I shoot—all will become part of us. You yourself grew in the womb on a diet of bluefish, duck, dove, grouse, woodcock, pheasant, and deer. I hope that hunting reinforces the lesson we'll also learn from fishing: that one life nurtures another; that we are sitting pretty (and lucky) at the top of a complex chain of organisms rising straight out of the earth; and that when we die (your own death is a concept you should not have to grapple with for quite some time), we will return to the earth.

I'll try to teach you how to show respect for a grouse, a sunfish, an eft (though at first I imagine your mind will

simply be boggled by the grouse's thunderous flight, the sunny's spines and lippy mouth, the fiery dazzle of the eft); how to respect all of earth and all of its inhabitants, including those fellows from New York and Bolivia and Swaziland and Beijing, who live far away but who are still in the same boat with us. There are far too many humans on the earth, but we couldn't resist adding you, just one more. If you become part of the solution—instead of simply another digit tacked onto the problem—you'll be worth it.

Naturally, I'm going to think you are worth it no matter what.

So, son or daughter, get ready to enjoy life—as I'm getting ready to enjoy this new dimension to mine.

With love and great expectations,  
your father

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WHAT MAY be the largest archery target in the world dwarfs its builder, Ed Eveland. The many life-size targets at Bowhunter's World, Columbia County, provide archers with possibly the best substitute for shooting at live game.

**Three-dimensional . . .**

## *Practical Practice*

**By Keith C. Schuyler**

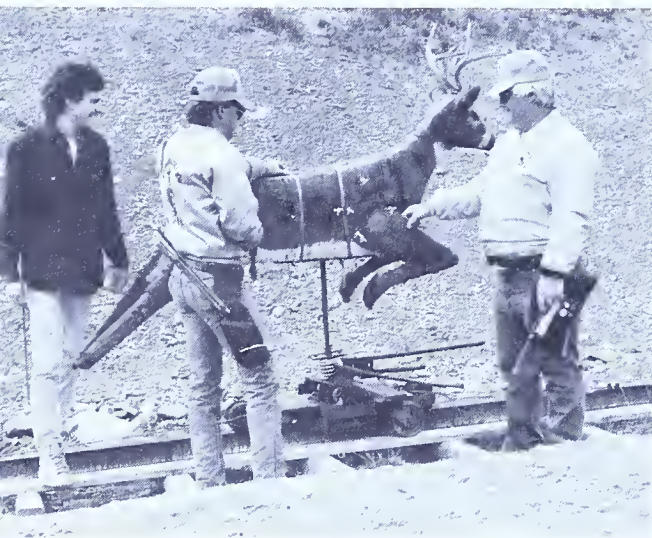
THE WORLD'S largest three-dimensional archery target, as far as I know, is what first catches your eye at Bowhunter's World near the village of Asbury. It is a charging bull African elephant that stands over ten feet high, is 20 feet long, and measures 12 feet 4 inches between the outside tips of the giant ears. It is only one of many life-size realistic creations by Edward Eveland. They range down to rabbit-size.

As any bow hunter knows, utilizing three-dimensional targets under field conditions is the best substitute for shooting at live game. Aside from the practice and entertainment it provides, a bow hunter can learn much about the accuracy required to make a successful shot. That's especially true when shoot-

ing at unknown distances. Those accustomed to shooting at known distances on the typical field range quickly discover the challenges associated with estimating distances.

The popularity of this type of shooting would lead most clubs to utilize three-dimensional targets, especially prior to the hunting season, but for two problems—cost and storage. Life-size targets take considerable space to store, and their costs are prohibitive for most cash-starved clubs. And, even if members with the time and ability are available, manufacturing costs are also high. Therefore, a facility such as the one at Bowhunter's World offers a chance for all archers to hone up on most of the requirements for an actual hunt.





**THE RUNNING DEER target, right, travels over 100 yards on metal tracks. Above, Ed and his two sons-in-law, Jeff Record and Chris Musselman, check marksmanship on the target they helped create.**



Ed Eveland, 46, doesn't claim to be the originator of the project that has become an important part of his archery business. "For years I enjoyed going to the Bowhunters' Festival at Forksville and shooting the 3-D animal targets and the running deer. For me, however, Festival weekend was all too short. That's what got me thinking of building a similar range where archers could shoot for fun and practice throughout the pleasant months of the year, before the hunting season."

### **Hunting Came Naturally**

Raised in the farming area of Asbury, hunting came naturally to Ed. "Like a lot of kids, I started with a stick bow." Two years later, at age 16, he shot his first deer with the bow. He also hunted with the gun and has killed deer with a rifle and a handgun. "But I kept going back to the bow, even though I've taken only three with one. To enhance my skills I took up competitive shooting and entered a number of amateur tournaments."

Eveland drew upon his background as a commercial artist to implement his plans for the still and animated menagerie of North American and exotic

animals that crowd the large old farm buildings in the off season. For the past 20 years he has traveled throughout most of the United States to promote his commercial sign painting business. Although creating the three-dimensional targets from styrofoam, burlap and fiber glass screen was a fresh challenge, expertise with a paint spray gun was an acquired skill that provides a natural appearing finish to all his targets.

Building life-size targets is not a one-man operation. Ed's wife Norma and two sons-in-law, Jeff Record and Chris Musselman provide plenty of assistance. Their initial targets were painstaking originals. Once they established patterns, however, as many as ten or more could be built, in assembly line fashion, in the large old barn that also serves for storage.

Ed first concentrated on Pennsylvania game animals. But once a sufficient supply of deer, bear, turkeys, foxes, woodchucks and raccoons were built, he turned his attention to greater challenges—exotic animals. His first attempts were on lions and tigers. Photos and information from encyclopedias



provided the basic information he used to build the targets to actual sizes and natural attitudes. Experience proved that replicas of some smaller creatures had to be made a bit larger than life size so they could take the repeated pounding of arrows. Each target is constructed to stop and hold field-pointed shafts. Blunts are not allowed because, although they are more easily pulled from the targets, they punch holes through them. No broadheads are presently permitted, although plans are in the offing to utilize older and expendable targets for the purpose.

Normally, 21 targets are set up for the field course. For Safari shoots, however, which include 100-yard plus distances for the elephant, a separate course is utilized. The elephant is mounted on a skid that is dragged by tractor into position. Although the courses are well posted to direct archers to the targets, no distances are posted. Every effort is made to maintain realistic hunting conditions. Shooting stakes are moved from time to time, to further maximize the challenges. The field courses are located primarily in brushy areas, but paths and shooting lanes have been cleared.

This summer Ed introduced several new exotics, including a rhinoceros, and in the "cages" are lions, tigers, gorillas and 16-foot crocodiles.

"My big project at the moment is to build all the animals needed to provide a complete North American big game course," Ed explained as we toured his facility. "It would include moose, caribou, mule deer, grizzly bear and elk. Aside from the fun of shooting at these targets, it would be practical practice for anyone planning an archery hunt for any of these species."

While shooting at actual big game

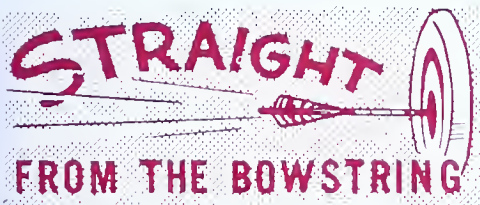


**LIFE-SIZE bear, above, and woodchuck, below, are but two more of the targets found at Bowhunter's World. Ed's goal is to have all the targets needed to provide a complete North American big game course.**



animals is not advisable under most circumstances, Ed's running deer target is — like at Forksville — a popular attraction. Again, distances are not marked. Shooting stakes are positioned 35 to 50 yards from the moving target. The full-size deer target travels just over 100 yards in each direction. It moves on metal tracks and is powered by an electric motor that activates a cable-pulley system. Ed created a high backstop to catch arrows that miss, and the foreground is sufficiently elevated to prevent arrows from hitting the metal track. The running deer target is operated only when there are at least 10 shooters in attendance.

A separate motorized arrangement





**NORMA EVELAND**, Ed's wife, minds the pro shop and serves refreshments on the busier days at Bowhunter's World.

provides shooting at small moving targets such as woodchucks and turkeys. Targets are affixed to an endless belt which pops them briefly into the shooter's view. Again, dirt embankments catch errant arrows and protect the mechanism.

### **Advance Arrangements**

Clubs are encouraged to make advance arrangements if they want to hold their own competitive shoots on the ranges. Various events are planned, such as league shooting at available targets, and shoots utilizing only deer targets. As days shorten, night shoots are planned, using only fox and raccoon targets. Reflectorized eyes, installed in each animal target, help locate them for the archer in this novel event.

Since a "kill zone" is marked on each big game target, a scoring system is provided for those wishing to check indi-

vidual abilities and for competition in team shooting. Points are awarded for good hits, but subtracted for hits outside the scoring area.

Ed's targets are durable enough to withstand normal attrition by the elements, but during the first year of operation, in 1987, vandalism became a problem. A number of the expensive targets were maliciously destroyed. State Police were alerted, and it became necessary to install a security system, which appears to have eliminated the problem.

Eveland maintains a pro shop stocked with bows, arrows and archery supplies on the premises, so equipment failures should present no problems. The shooting facilities are open from 9:00 a.m. to dusk, Wednesdays through Sundays. Participants may shoot throughout the day. Official opening day is the Sunday nearest the first of May, and the facility remains operational until just before the opening of the archery deer season. Refreshments are available. Modern restrooms are provided in the registration area.

To promote Bowhunter's World and to develop a mailing list, Eveland takes his pro shop to the Bloomsburg Fair in late September. The range itself is located by taking Bloomsburg-Light Street Exit 34 off I-80, north on Rt. 487. From the village of Forks, it is 2½ miles. Eveland can be reached by telephone at: 717-925-2929.

### **Needed: Dedicated Grouse and Woodcock Hunters**

Game Commission biologists are in need of grouse and woodcock hunters to help in the management of these forest birds. All that's asked of cooperators is that they keep track of hours hunted and number of birds flushed. If interested contact the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Bureau of Wildlife Management, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.





**THE FINANCIAL** benefit of shotshell reloading is but one reason for cranking out your own fodder. There also is the satisfaction of creating the type of load you want, anytime you want.

## ***Shotshell Reloads***

**By Don Lewis**

**Photos by Helen Lewis**

**O**NE OF the most overlooked facets of small game hunting is shotshell reloading. I suspect that only one out of ten small game hunters reloads his ammo. Simple surveys I have conducted at sports shows and gun seminars indicate it's uncommon to find rabbit and grouse hunters who reload their own shotshells. When asked why they don't reload, the standard response is that reloading shotgun shells is just for skeet and trap shooters. That isn't true. The small game hunter who reloads his own hunting ammo adds an enjoyable dimension to his sport.

I think many people feel shotshell reloading is only for competitive shooters because they burn a lot more ammo,

which doesn't just justify home reloading, but makes it nearly mandatory, considering the cost of factory shells. I am not trying to persuade anybody to take up reloading to save money. The initial cost of reloading equipment and components will pay for several dozen boxes of factory shotshells. In time, the financial benefit from reloading your own scattergun fodder, will pay off but there's more. There's the satisfaction that comes from cranking out your own shells. That in itself is sufficient to justify shotshell reloading but, in a more practical sense, being able to have any type of load you want, anytime you want, is an important factor that too many shooters overlook.

A surprising number of shooters feel shotshell reloading is vastly different and more difficult than rifle reloading. I'm not going to say they're entirely wrong, but often the differences are blown out of proportion. In the first place, every type of reloading requires care and caution; the operator must pay strict attention to every detail.

Many of today's shotshell reloading presses, such as the MEC Hustler 76, are designed for mass reloading. The Hustler, for instance, incorporates an hydraulic system powered by an electric motor. The hydraulic pump supplies instant and consistent pressure. Every stroke of the cylinder piston performs all operations at six reloading stations, and every downstroke produces one finished round. Such a press is strictly for the competitor, not for the rabbit, pheasant or waterfowl hunter. The needs of a small game hunter is vastly different from the competitor who shoots from cement.

Numerous less expensive shotshell reloaders are more than adequate for the hunter. Among these are the Hornady 105, MEC 600 Jr., Lee Load-



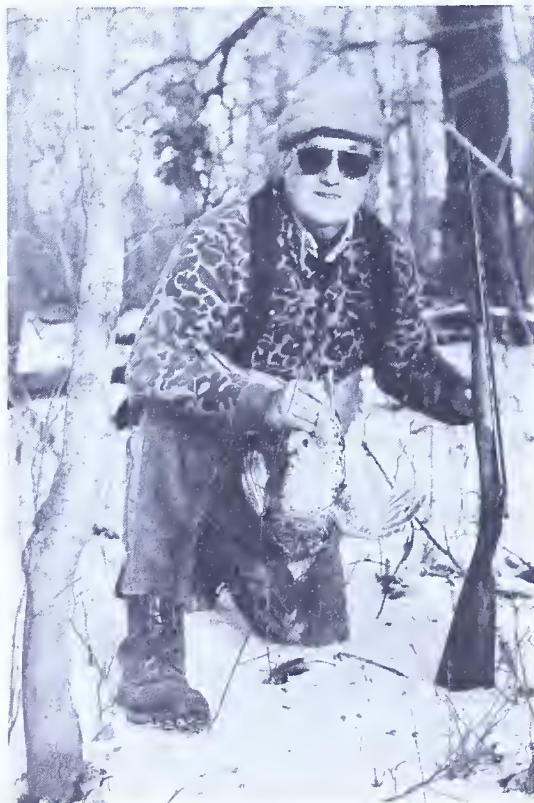
All II, Bear Honey Bear and the Ponsness-Warren Du-O-Matic 375. Most of these are single-stage, simplified versions of larger, progressive-type presses. While they are slower and have no automated features, such as automatic primer feed, they turn out perfect rounds. I have a Ponsness-Warren 800 Size-O-Matic that is capable of cranking out 700 to 900 rounds per hour, with an operator and a helper, but I load my hunting ammo on the P/W 375 Du-O-Matic or a Lee Load-All. I like the idea of loading only a dozen or so rounds specifically for the next day's hunt. I've always referred to the Lee Load-All as the "hunter's press;" it's simple, durable and inexpensive.

If you have no experience with shotshell reloading, I suggest reading a good handbook on reloading basics before buying any type of equipment. Several manuals explain shotshell reloading techniques, and *Handloader's Digest*, covers all types of reloading and gives information on the latest equipment.

Once the equipment is set up, select a batch of empty shotshell hulls. Stick with one brand and type, and make certain the crimp end is not frayed or torn. In shotshell reloading it's important to keep track of the kinds of cases you're using.

All shotshell cases, even those of the same gauge and manufacture, are not constructed in the same manner, nor are they always made of the same material. There are significant differences in the inside dimensions and base wad contour among various brands and types. The inside dimensions are impor-

**MANY SMALL GAME hunters are missing out on the enjoyable dimension of the sport that comes from reloading shotshells. It's a mistake to think reloading is only for the competitive shooter.**





tant because they govern the volume of the case, which is critical to the safety and performance of the finished round. Loads suggested in shotshell reloading manuals are developed for use in a specific shotshell case and its equally specific volume. A cardinal rule to remember is that you can't mix cases of different brands or types and expect to reload them successfully with the same primers, wads and powders.

Too much ado is made over low brass and high brass. The height of the brass means very little, and has nothing to do with the kind of load the shell will take or how strong the case is. Basically, there are two types of shotshell cases—paper base and plastic base. The paper base is any case that has a paper base in it, and it can have either a plastic or paper hull. Paper base cases normally require greater powder charges than plastic base cases to obtain a given velocity. Obviously, the plastic base case has a plastic base. It can be either an insert type or a one-piece compression-formed moulding. Data for paper base and plastic base cases may not be interchanged. Using loads for paper base cases in plastic cases is dangerous.

There is still a lot of confusion over "dram equivalent." One of the reasons for reloading is to duplicate factory rounds that have proven successful in the past. Unfortunately, the data listed on the shell box do not reveal much information other than the size and weight of the shot, in ounces, and the "dram equivalent."

The weight of the shot poses no problem, but the term "dram equivalent" is a mystery to many. Actually, a dram is just a unit of weight which equals 0.0625 ounces. It was the common unit when black powder was used in shotshells. During the transition period from black to smokeless powder, manufacturers referred to the smokeless charges in the old terms so hunters could easily relate to the new ammunition. Thus, a given charge of smokeless was loaded to give the shot charge a velocity equivalent to that created by so many drams of black powder. To this day factory loaded shot-

shells are still said to be loaded with a "drams equivalent" charge. In a practical sense, the drams equivalent number is an indication of the velocity level of the load, for the more powder that's used with a given shot charge, the higher the velocity. Also the chamber pressure and recoil.

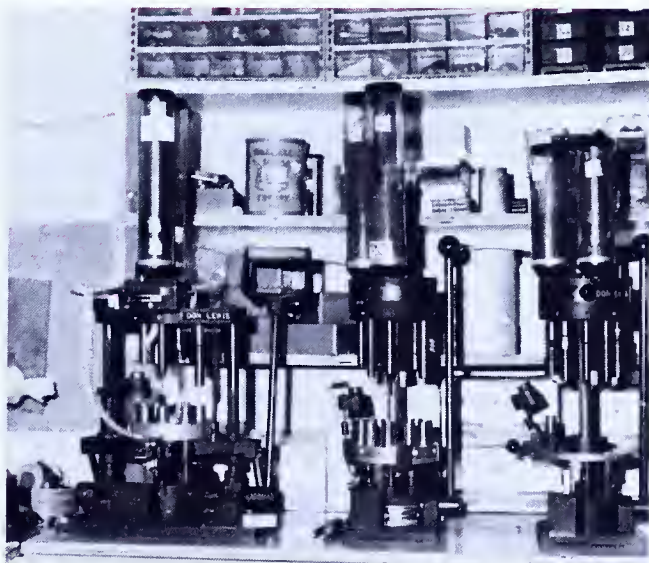
In my book it's senseless to keep printing "dram equivalent" on shotshell boxes. It has no meaning to today's handloader, who works with grains (another unit of weight). From the hunter's standpoint, it would make more sense if the manufacturer simply listed the load's velocity on the box.

#### **Strong Advocate**

Some may disagree with my philosophy on shotshell reloading, but I'm a strong advocate for using the exact components called for in the reloading manuals. If I don't have, for example, the primer specified for a given load, I don't substitute; I switch to an alternate load for which I have the exact components specified for the brand and type of case I'm reloading.

Handloaders working with rifle cartridges are always concerned about chamber pressure. They should be. The pressure produced by a given rifle load

**THE multi-stage Ponsness/Warren 800 B Size-0-Matic, left, the P/W 600 Multi-Matic, center, and the single-stage P/W 375 Duo-Matic typify the variety of shotshell reloaders. For hunting purposes, the single-stage type is normally more than adequate.**





**RAYMOND MECHLING, Kittanning, shown here using a MEC 600 Jr., used five MEC presses to reload 65,000 rounds a year when he operated a shotshell reloading shop.**

varies with the dimensions of the individual rifle. The rate of twist and the measurements of throat, bore and chamber have distinct effects on chamber pressure. Such things are not as important with shotshell reloading. Tiny dimensional differences in shotgun chambers and bores have relatively little impact on the pressure figure. That doesn't mean you can throw caution to the wind, but for all practical purposes, pressure is largely contained in the shotshell case itself. Therefore, that's where we must look to analyze shotshell pressures. It's not so much dimensional changes that affect pressure, it's component changes that play havoc with the buildup of gases in a shotshell hull.

To show how important sticking with the suggested components is, information listed in Lyman's *Shotshell Handbook* shows that in one particular load simply substituting one primer for another can boost pressures from 8500 LUP (lead units of pressure) to 10,300.

That's an increase of 21 percent, and means it's getting a bit close to the danger zone. And there's no significant increase in velocity—a mere 20 fps—in return for this rise in pressure. That's not a good tradeoff in any sense, but the important thing to recognize here is that what might seem a simple exchange of components can have unexpected consequences in shotshell reloading.

I mentioned earlier about duplicating a factory round but, in essence, what we're actually attempting to duplicate is the performance of a given factory shell. We may be able to duplicate factory velocity, but not factory pressures. Factory ammo is assembled to exact, rigidly controlled standards. Factories also can safely work with pressure levels that would be unsafe in reloads. That may sound a bit off key, but factories work with their own components or ones made to their specifications. In other words, they keep complete and precise control over every aspect of shotshell



assembly. If a special primer is needed for a specific purpose, then a primer is manufactured to fit that particular need. It's the same for every component. The fact that ammo makers work with new shotshell cases, not ones that have been fired one or more times, is another important point.

My advice to a new shotshell reloader would be to start on the bottom rung of the ladder. Don't go overboard with a progressive press, an array of powders, wads and shot, and a wide assortment of empty hulls. Stick with just one load. Buy 100 once-fired AA Winchester cases, say, reload them 25 at a time, closely following the data in a good manual, and then evaluate their performance. Be patient. Give yourself plenty of time to get the hang of shotshell reloading.

The important aspect—and it's fun, to boot—is patterning. Don't reload to save; reload to shoot. Over a period of time the results on the patterning sheets will show how your particular shotgun handles certain loads. You can't learn this unless you shoot. You can't become a good wingshot by just hunting. It takes practice. You can become more proficient in the grouse coverts come fall if you spend ample time

The Game Commission will be conducting an auction of confiscated firearms on Saturday, October 8, at the Lebanon County Fair Grounds. Buyers must be at least 18 years of age, Pennsylvania residents, and able to produce positive identification. Personal checks and cash will be accepted. For further information write to the Game Commission, Bureau of Law Enforcement, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.

breaking claybirds during the summer. As shotshell reloading saves 50 percent or more of the cost of factory ammo, it's plain why you have to reload if you want to break a lot of claybirds or do much patterning.

When you become proficient enough to produce good reliable shotshell ammo, reloading is not only financially profitable but also psychologically satisfying. In the final analysis, you can create a reload tailored for your shotgun, not one produced by a factory.

When you drop a rooster or tumble a rabbit with one of your own creations, it adds a new dimension to small game hunting. There's a personal touch to this that no writer can describe; you have to do it to know what I mean.

## New Big Game Records Book

Pennsylvania's deer and bear harvests have attracted nationwide attention for many years, so more than two decades ago the Game Commission began measuring whitetail racks and bear skulls and collecting this data into permanent records. From 1965 through 1986, nine official statewide measuring programs were held. Thousands of deer and hundreds of bears were measured, using the internationally recognized Boone and Crockett system so that hunters could see how Pennsylvania trophies compared with those taken anywhere in North America. Results of these individual scoring sessions were reported in GAME NEWS. Now we have produced a 216-page hard cover book, *Pennsylvania Big Game Records, 1965-1986*, integrating the scores of all nine programs into one master list. Also included are the stories of dozens of the successful hunts, along with hundreds of trophy photos and related material. *Pennsylvania Big Game Records* can be ordered now from the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797. Price is \$10 delivered.

# *In the wind*

bob mitchell



The Iowa Department of Natural Resources trapped 725 wild turkeys last winter. Of those, 266 were relocated within the state, the remainder were sent to Texas and other states for reintroduction purposes. As an example of how intricate some of the arrangements can be, in 1987 Iowa sent turkeys to Kentucky, which provided funding to Louisiana, which, in turn, sent river otters to Iowa.

In a break from the 30-year stand to not interfere with the wolves on Isle Royale, specialists have decided to trap six of the 12 wolves remaining on the island. Blood samples will be taken from the animals, radio collars will be affixed, and then they will be released. The project team hopes to save the population from extinction, or at least learn why it happens if it does. Disease, the lack of new breeding stock to bolster the population, and a lack of prey are the main suspected causes for the drop in wolf numbers on the refuge.

**Of the 78,265 whitetails harvested in North Carolina last year, 41,368 were taken with a rifle; 27,850 with a shotgun; 3927 with a muzzleloader; 3498 with a bow; and 149 with a handgun. Implements used for the remaining 1473 deer were not specified.**

Plans are underway to divide the world's only known population of black-footed ferrets, currently being held at the Sybille Wildlife Research and Conservation Education Center in Wyoming; none are known to exist in the wild. The population is being divided to establish additional captive breeding centers, to safeguard against disease or any other potential hazard.

Air pollution at the North Pole rivals that of the average American city. According to the National Wildlife Federation, the first evidence that the Arctic Circle was polluted came in 1972, when scientists detected a high amount of dust in the polar air. Since then researchers have discovered that the pollutants, for the most part, are coming from the Soviet Union, Western Europe, and Prudhoe Bay on Alaska's North Slope.

Ten bald eagles were found dead over a two-month period last spring on Maryland's Eastern Shore. State and federal officials suspect the birds died from feeding on poisoned animals, probably raccoons. If that should be the case, the persons responsible would be liable for the eagle deaths, as the birds are protected under the Endangered Species Act from deliberate and unintentional killings.

**The Ohio Department of Natural Resources is giving 22 pheasants—18 hens and four roosters—to every landowner enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program who maintains at least five acres of unmowed grass cover.**

Entrance fees are now being charged at three national wildlife refuges in the Northeast—Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Virginia; Blackwater NWR, Maryland; and Bombay Hook NWR, Delaware. The three join 19 other national refuges where entrance fees have been charged since 1987. A Federal Duck Stamp, by the way, is considered a year round pass to the refuges. Proceeds will be used for wetland acquisitions.

The northern spotted owl has been classified as an endangered species by the Washington Wildlife Commission. An estimated 500 to 600 pairs live in the state, primarily in old-growth forests on the east and west slopes of the Cascades and on the Olympic Peninsula. The species is threatened by the loss of suitable habitat, a situation even more alarming because of the bird's low reproductive rate. Of 46 areas monitored from 1984 through 1986, only four pairs reproduced; of 59 sites checked in 1987, no evidence of reproduction was found; and last year, on the entire Olympic Peninsula, where 100 pairs are thought to exist, only three successful nests were found.





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## Outdoor Recreation Maps

To help outdoorsmen discover more of what Pennsylvania has to offer, the Game Commission has produced six "Outdoor Recreation Maps." Each multi-color 24 x 36-inch map covers one of the Commission's field regions. Highlighted are Game Lands, State Forests and Parks, and private lands enrolled in the Commission's public access programs. Also depicted are municipalities, roads, waterways, and — giving the map a three-dimensional appearance — 100-foot contour lines. Maps are printed on Tyvek, a tear-resistant, water-repellent material which will withstand years of hard use. Each regional map costs \$4 delivered, and can be ordered from the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797. If you are not sure of which maps you want, write for a PGC map order form.



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OCTOBER 1986

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*Snowy Egret*, by John Pritko, is the sixth limited edition fine art print available through the Pennsylvania Game Commission's Working Together for Wildlife program. As with the previous editions, *Snowy Egret* is limited to 600 signed and numbered prints. Image size is approximately 15 × 22½ inches, printed on acid-free 100 percent rag paper. Price is \$125; framed prints are an additional \$97.50. Requests for specific numbers will be satisfied on a first-come, first-served basis. Limited numbers of *Country Lane Kestrel* and *Autumn Challenge*, 1986 and 1987 prints, are still available. Orders should be sent to the Pennsylvania Game Commission, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Dept. AR, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.



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## North American Waterfowl Management Plan

IT'S NO secret; waterfowl numbers aren't what they used to be, not even what they were only a decade ago. During the 1970s fall duck numbers hovered around 100 million. Since then they've been lucky to reach 70 million.

The loss of suitable habitat is the primary reason. Over half the wetlands that existed in Colonial times have become croplands, highways and cities, and the losses are continuing. Around a half-million acres of wetlands are being destroyed each year. Most are being converted for agricultural purposes, others for urban and industrial development.

The same is true for Canada, where a large percentage of North America's waterfowl is produced. Up to 40 percent of the wetlands have been lost in some areas, and recent surveys across Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba indicate nearly 60 percent of the prairie pothole basins are threatened by farming.

Waterfowl are valuable. The enjoyment they provide to sportsmen and other conservationists is immeasurable, but the revenues hunters, birdwatchers and other naturalists spend on licenses, travel, equipment, food and related expenses amount to several billion dollars a year.

In an effort to address this problem while there's still time, the United States and Canada have developed a multi-faceted plan of attack. Called the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, the agreement outlines a broad set of goals the two countries — and probably Mexico, too — will strive to attain by the year 2000.

The major objective is to restore duck numbers to what they averaged during the 1970s — 62 million in the breeding season, about 100 million in the fall. Except for a few regional problems, goose, brant and swan numbers are to be maintained at current levels.

To accomplish those goals the two nations have identified key waterfowl habitat areas that need to be protected and enhanced. These areas include 3.6 million acres of nesting habitat in Canada and 1.1 million in this country; 686,000 acres of migration and wintering habitat in the lower Mississippi River-Gulf Coast region; 70,000 acres of nesting and migration habitat in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence lowlands for black ducks and other waterfowl; and 60,000 acres along the east coast for black duck migration and wintering areas. Plans are also underway to enhance the carrying capacity of existing waterfowl habitat.

The plan is ambitious. Its success depends on more than just the efforts of the two federal governments. State wildlife agencies, of course, are becoming involved. Waterfowl management activities will no doubt be increased on public lands. Private organizations such as Ducks Unlimited and Wildlife Habitat Canada will have to assume vital roles in carrying out plan objectives.

In the end, everybody concerned about North American waterfowl will have to join in. If you're a landowner, explore ways to improve conditions for waterfowl on your property. Everybody, hunters and nonhunters, should buy federal duck stamps. Support private conservation organizations, help educate your children and others of the plight facing waterfowl and what can be done, and support efforts to conserve unprotected wetlands in your area.

The problem's widespread, the stakes are high, the solution isn't simple, quick or cheap. But a realistic plan has been developed, sound objectives have been identified, and many aspects have already been implemented. It's going to take the support of all of us, however, to carry this plan through. — *Bob Mitchell.*





# Buck'n The Odds

By Charlie Burchfield

**T**HE majority of the buck harvest occurs during the first two days of the antlered deer season. It is figured that the opening day alone accounts for about 60 percent of the annual harvest. That figure leads many hunters to believe that their chances of success after the first day are slim to none; but such is not the case for those who are willing to buck the odds.

Admittedly, there are fewer bucks available after the first day. But on the other hand, there are fewer hunters looking for those remaining deer.

Looking back to last year's buck season, this post first day philosophy paid off for me. I had hunted the first two days out of our Potter County camp. As I had the week to hunt, I decided to hunt closer to home, in Clearfield County, along the local ridges where I had seen a number of nice bucks before the season.

Thursday morning found me near SGL 93 near Home Camp. My plan was to hunt along the fence that runs along I-80. Many never consider hunting near an interstate because of the distracting highway noises. This tactic, however, had worked for me in the past; so today I thought I'd give it a try once more.

## Plenty of Tracks

After getting settled I began to slowly walk about 75 yards or so from the fence paralleling the highway. There were plenty of deer tracks in the snow, and it seemed as though a good number of animals had been frequenting the area. Now, if only I could come across a buck that made this area home. As I started up a gentle uphill I spied several deer slowly working their way through a grape thicket. Immediately I leaned up against a tree to avoid being detected by the deer. While keeping my eyes on the



THE SNOWY EGRET is the seventh species in the Game Commission's Working Together for Wildlife program. The program is intended to generate support for nongame animals. This year's snowy egret patch is priced at \$3, delivered. Patches of the bluebird, bobcat, kestrel and elk are still available; those of the osprey and river otter are sold out. Decals (\$1 each) of the first six species are still available, but none of the egret is being made. Order from the Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.

lead whitetail I eased my binoculars up to better see the deer. There wasn't a buck in the group.

After walking the fence line as far as I cared to, I altered my course and returned to a more peaceful setting. Before long the highway noises were replaced by the sound of snow compacting beneath my boots.

Heading deeper into the Game Lands I came to an access road. A stand of mature timber bordered the right side of the road and to my left there was a clearcut that lead out onto a narrow ridge line. The cutting was an excellent place for deer to feed, so my path shifted to follow the edge of the cutting.

The uphill walk was slow, but I had a good feeling about where I was going and what I would see. Topping the ridge I was greeted by a trio of doe coming up

over the opposite side. They crossed over the top and headed into the clearcut, possibly to feed on the still succulent browse growing in the timbered area. Hoping a buck would follow, I waited, but no racked beauty appeared.

Following the edge of the cutting I worked my way out toward the point of the ridge. When I got about 200 yards from the point deer began popping up about 50 yards in front of me. It was a bonanza. I had found a bedding area and close to a dozen deer were spotted. The only problem was that I couldn't identify all the deer. As they bounded down over the ridge line away from the clearcut, I waited to see if any more would appear. As luck would have it, the ridge was not void of deer.

### Best Option

Since the fleeing whitetails had gone down the steep side of the ridge, I figured my best option was to work my way to the edge of the steep terrain and take a look. Possibly some of the deer had taken refuge on the nearly vertical hillside.

Working my way to the edge I looked down into the hollow below and could see the small stream that wound its way along the bottom. I spotted one deer at the base of the hill. Surely there were others down there, I said to myself while glancing at my watch that read 2:15. As the deer calmly walked onto the opposite ridge, several other deer moved farther up. Thinking one of those animals might be a buck, I desperately wanted to get into a better position to see. My only choice, however, was to move down the hillside, a hillside that was steep and snow covered.

The hillside I was on and the one I faced formed a narrow and steep hollow. It was just the kind of terrain that gave the deer the advantage and the hunter fits. With deer in the ravine below me, nearly inaccessible, I knew every move made had to be done slowly and deliberately in order to not be detected.

While making my descent, I could see down into the hollow and across to the opposite hillside. The area was com-



**THE DISTANCE** involved was not an average shot. I used a tree for a rest and held the crosshairs high on the deer's back. Then it was a matter of waiting until he walked into a spot that would allow me a clear shot.

ing alive with deer. In the course of just ten minutes I counted 20 deer. There just had to be a buck among the bunch.

As soon as I worked down the ridge far enough to be on the same level as the deer on the opposite ridge, I carefully began searching for the buck. The deer were feeding, and as they moved slowly along the steep hillside, I had the chance to clearly see nearly every deer. All I could see, however, were does. With only a few more animals yet to observe, my hopes of seeing a buck were diminishing. That attitude changed, however, when I glassed the last group of deer. One carried a set of spikes.

There's a saying among hunters that states, "It takes a lot of skill to shoot a spike." The reason is due to the fact that spike bucks are often hard to see; and, on top of that, at least one antler must be three inches long to be legal.

Sometimes that can be a difficult determination to make, and now I was being put to the test. I watched that buck for 15 minutes before concluding he was legal. In most cases it would have been a simple matter of then just squeezing the trigger. Such was not the case in this instance, though. I was on one hillside and the buck on the other. The distance involved was not an average shot. I used a tree for a rest and held the crosshairs high on the deer's back.

Then it was a matter of waiting until he walked into a spot that would allow



me a clear shot. Seconds seemed to drag and I thought I'd never get a decent shot. But patience paid off. After about five minutes the hollow echoed with the roar of my rifle.

The report sent deer running in all directions, with the exception of one. After being so deliberate in all my previous moves, my decent to the floor of the hollow and across to the other side was fast and uncaring. Approaching the fallen buck I looked at my watch; it was nearly 3:30.

Some don't consider a spike a trophy, but to me, this one was. The real reward came not in the taking of a deer, but in the hunt itself. It had been a hunt that combined many of the skills I had worked so hard to hone over the years, the result of which would allow our family to enjoy venison over the winter. Patience and persistence had paid off and served as the key ingredients which helped me to buck the first day odds.

## Note Regarding Waterfowl Seasons

We normally publish in the October issue the seasons and bag limits for waterfowl. That information does not appear in this issue because the printing date for GAME NEWS has been moved ahead and we have not yet received the necessary federal approval for our recommended dates. Before hunting, check your newspaper for our news releases giving seasons and bag limits.

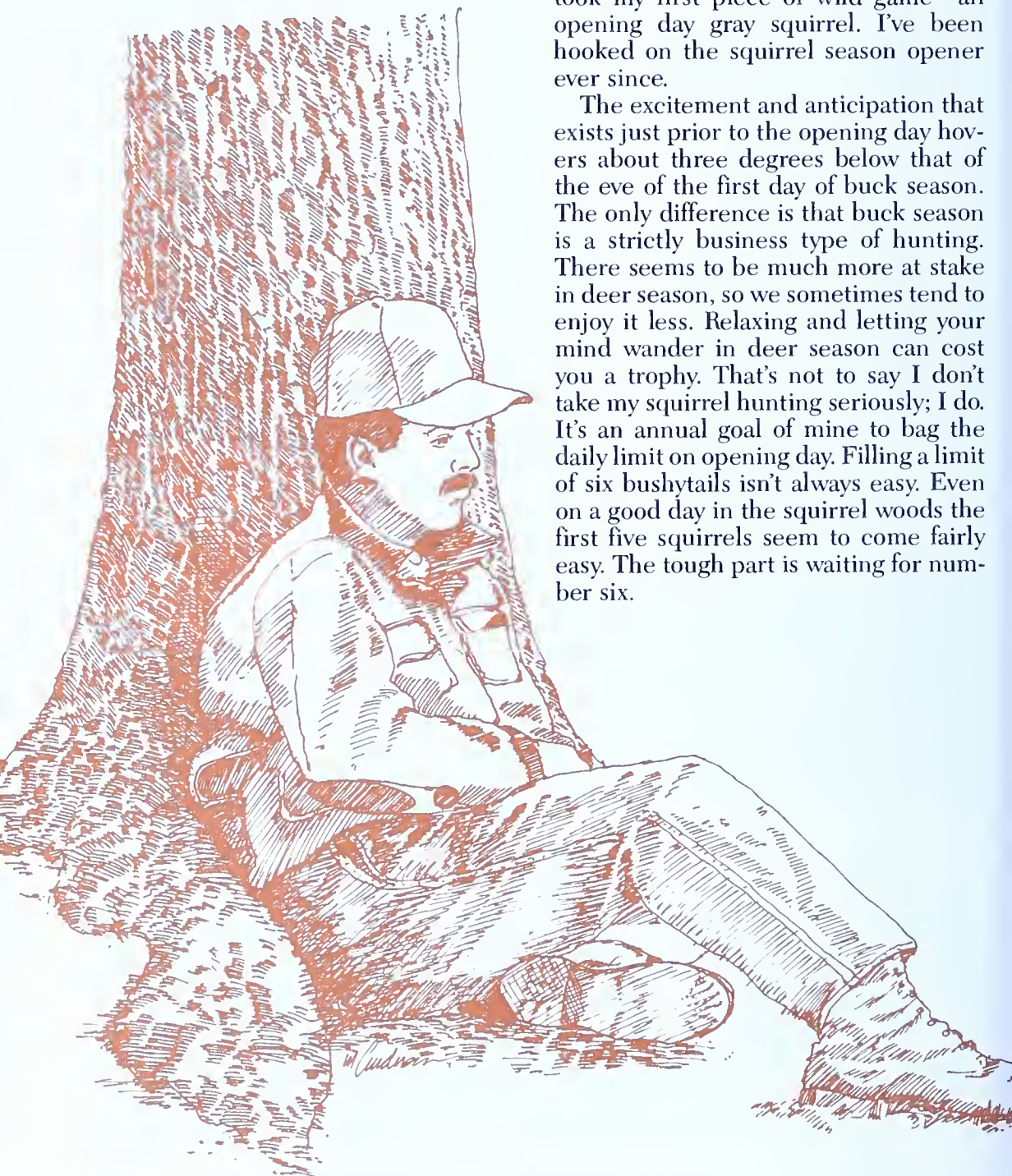
# Waiting For Number Six

By Karl J. Power

**M**ID OCTOBER is a special time in Penn's Woods. The air is cool, crisp and has that autumn aroma. The deciduous woodlots have a colorful aura that gives a walk in the woods a fantasy

land effect. Maybe that's one of the reasons why I've made it a personal tradition to be sitting at the base of a large oak tree before daybreak on the opening day of squirrel season. That special feeling goes back to my youth when I took my first piece of wild game—an opening day gray squirrel. I've been hooked on the squirrel season opener ever since.

The excitement and anticipation that exists just prior to the opening day hovers about three degrees below that of the eve of the first day of buck season. The only difference is that buck season is a strictly business type of hunting. There seems to be much more at stake in deer season, so we sometimes tend to enjoy it less. Relaxing and letting your mind wander in deer season can cost you a trophy. That's not to say I don't take my squirrel hunting seriously; I do. It's an annual goal of mine to bag the daily limit on opening day. Filling a limit of six bushytails isn't always easy. Even on a good day in the squirrel woods the first five squirrels seem to come fairly easy. The tough part is waiting for number six.





Last year was no exception. I was out of bed, wolfed down a cup of coffee, gathered my hunting gear and was out my back door about the time the sky was beginning to glow behind the trees on the east border of my property. As I walked down the driveway on my way past the barn I stopped to grab two large handfuls of gravel. I put them in the game vest pocket that held my squirrel call. Flinging pebbles into the dry leaves while working a squirrel call produces a very realistic imitation of the sounds made by feeding grays.

My pace hastened as I angled through the pasture to the wooded hillside at the rear of my property. As I entered the trees I slowed down to a quiet, snail-like pace. The sun was just beginning to top the horizon. It was still dark enough to make it difficult to avoid stepping on the twigs that lay on the deer trail that I followed. Actually, treading lightly was probably unnecessary because the bushytails were still probably curled into furry balls, fast asleep. I settled in at the base of a large white oak and patiently watched the sun rise through the treetops. I listened to the small birds and chipmunks call good morning to the residents of the woodlot; it was nature at its best.

Before long I began to hear shots in the distance, which made me a little anxious about when it would be my turn to shoot. Suddenly, I heard rustling in the leaves, a sure sign that an acrobatic tree dweller was on the ground. The sound drew my eyes to the moving leaves about 35 yards to my left. The squirrel was not visible through the many leaves still attached to the trees. The bushytail worked its way out of range, with only the sight of shaking branches marking its escape.

I decided that now would be an excellent time to put the squirrel call to use. I began imitating squirrel barks and chatters, and tossing small stones across the dry fallen leaves. It wasn't long before a squirrel came bouncing along the ground in a wave-like motion. Every time the bushytail stopped it was behind a tree. The squirrel failed to reap-

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pear after several minutes, but I waited with gun raised to the ready position and pointed at the ground on the right side of the tree trunk. To my surprise, a sharp bark alerted me to the squirrel that was now on the first branch of that same tree. I brought the barrel of the 12-gauge in line with the gray squirrel and the gun's report sent it to the ground with a thud. Staying put, I visually marked the spot where it fell.

### Quiet

The next ten minutes were quiet. Except for one obnoxious blue jay, nothing else seemed to be moving. I waited five more minutes and then began to tap the plunger on the squirrel call. Suddenly, directly in front of me, the head of a red fox appeared from behind a fallen log. The vixen was gone in a flash at the sight of me. I was amazed at how the predator managed to get nearly in my lap without me witnessing its approach.

No sooner had the red fox fled that I noticed two squirrels playfully chasing each other through the treetops. To my surprise, the two squirrels came to an abrupt stop at the end of a white ash branch. The first squirrel turned and came nose to nose with its companion.

One blast sent both squirrels plummeting to the ground. Three squirrels, one half the daily limit, with only two shots. I also let those squirrels lay until I decided to vacate my stand. The sight of a man will cause squirrels to stay hidden longer than the sound of a gunshot.

It was a good half hour before another squirrel showed itself. When it did come into view I noticed that it came in on the same route that the first squirrel of the day escaped. If this was, indeed, that same squirrel, it wasn't going to escape again. The Remington pump took it neatly from the young oak tree.

### Number Five

By 9:45 it seemed like a good time for a candy bar and a luke warm can of coke (Classic, of course). About halfway through the Snickers bar gray squirrel number five, flicking its tail, appeared on an old stump. With the candy bar in my mouth and the wrapper around and up my nose, I raised the shotgun, shot and made the score 5-0 in my favor.

I was on a roll. I needed only one more squirrel to make my goal. I had managed to score on five squirrels without moving to another location. My posterior was, however, becoming quite numb. By 10:00 I couldn't take sitting any longer. Slowly, and rather ungracefully, I managed to stand up. I couldn't

move very fast after sitting in one spot for more than three hours. I had five squirrels to retrieve and my body was telling me that now was the time to get them.

After collecting the squirrels I noticed that one was a nice fox squirrel, the first fox squirrel I had bagged in nearly six years. I cleaned the five squirrels, laid them down beside me, and began to wait for number six.

For the next two hours I could hear squirrels barking all over the woodlot. The fall foliage had yet to reach its peak; the vivid colors were mainly limited to the sassafras, dogwoods and other understory trees. Occasional red and sugar maples seemed to join the large tulip trees that had by now reached their pinnacle in fall foliage colors. The oaks, hickories, walnuts and butternuts that provide the mainstay of the squirrels' diet still tightly held their dense green foliage, which made locating tree dwelling bushytails rather difficult. There were the barks, rustling leaves and an occasional glimpse of a flicking tail in the sun. By now, it seemed, the squirrels must have known that I needed one more to satisfy myself and the daily limit; and they were not anxious to oblige me. That's one of the reasons I use a shotgun in the early season. It's nearly impossible to achieve a limit

## New Big Game Records Book

Pennsylvania's deer and bear harvests have attracted nationwide attention for many years, so more than two decades ago the Game Commission began measuring whitetail racks and bear skulls and collecting this data into permanent records. From 1965 through 1986, nine official statewide measuring programs were held. Thousands of deer and hundreds of bears were measured, using the internationally recognized Boone and Crockett system so that hunters could see how Pennsylvania trophies compared with those taken anywhere in North America. Results of these individual scoring sessions were reported in *GAME NEWS*. Now we have produced a 216-page hard cover book, *Pennsylvania Big Game Records, 1965-1986*, integrating the scores of all nine programs into one master list. Also included are the stories of dozens of the successful hunts, along with hundreds of trophy photos and related material. *Pennsylvania Big Game Records* can be ordered now from the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797. Price is \$10 delivered.



I SAW IT. Frozen, looking like a gnarled piece of white oak limb, lay a plump gray. Why hadn't I seen it before? How did it get there? I also asked myself why I was asking myself questions.

when the dense foliage hinders your chances with a scoped rimfire. The small bore rifle replaces my shotgun in the squirrel woods as soon as most of the leaves drop.

High noon on a sunny day is not a productive time for squirrel activity. They primarily rest in tree crotches and large limbs, relaxing and sunning themselves. At this point the solo hunter can have a difficult time spotting them. Two or more hunters can outsmart grays by walking around trees, scaring squirrels to one another. The lone hunter can try tossing sticks or stones on the opposite sides of trees to move squirrels around to his side. If you don't actually see the squirrel in the tree, however, you can waste a lot of time, and look rather silly in the process.

I decided to sit and scan every tree trunk and branch, and to examine each out of place lump or dark spot. Straining my eyes for the sight of a tail hanging with the sun illuminating it had me suffering eye fatigue. I also was getting tired of listening to myself melodiously whisper the longest medley of "oldies" songs imaginable.

By 12:30 the sounds and sights of squirrel evidence were nonexistent. My wife Lois had made arrangements that made late afternoon hunting impossible. I should have marked the date on the calendar, as I usually do when I am not to be disturbed, so this wouldn't happen, so I took the blame. It had been the longest two and a half hours, waiting for a chance at the daily limit. I was anxious, bored, tired of 60s songs, and



my confidence was at a very low level. I had even filled nine and a half pages in my pocket note book with ideas for the magazine articles and newspaper columns I write.

I remembered the peanut butter and jelly sandwich in the left pocket of my game vest, and I thought about deer season as soon as I pulled the smashed sandwich from my pocket. Deer season law #7—your peanut butter and jelly sandwich MUST be smashed in deer season. About four bites into the sandwich, with nothing to wash it down with, I saw it. Frozen, looking like a gnarled piece of white oak limb, lay a plump gray. Why hadn't I seen it before? How did it get there? I also asked myself why I was wasting time asking myself questions. Slowly the Remington raised toward the statue-like gray squirrel in the oak . . . At last, the wait for number six was over.

## Thoughts While Walking

*I slept and dreamed that life was beauty,  
I woke and found that life was duty.*

—Ellen Sturgis Hooper



*McRae*



# Anatomy of a Hunting Accident

**By Bob Shaffer**

**WCO, Greene County**

**I**T IS mid-December. The day is a little cloudy in Greene County, with the temperature in the 40s. Karen and her friend Harry decide to take one of their regular walks. They have been spending some time together since Karen's divorce and the subsequent accidental death of her ex-husband. Karen's five children are managing but things are tough for the 39-year-old woman and she has found one way to relax is with a peaceful hike.

Karen and Harry pull on their walking jackets, Harry's tan and lightweight, Karen's a windbreaker with army camouflage design. Neither wears a hat. It's not chilly and there's no wind. They drive from the Carmichaels area to their usual hiking spot, a narrow isolated dirt road leading back into SGL 223. On the way they remember that this is the last day of the 1987 extended antlerless season. They do not have any bright clothing on but what the heck, they are not going hunting. Anyhow, there will be few hunters on this last day and they intend to stay on the road.

They pull off the main road, find their usual spot to park the truck and jump out. The first leg of their hike takes them about a mile to an old stone house. There they turn around and hike back past their parked vehicle and head for their next turn-around spot, an old yellow gate that marks the end of the road where a private camp property starts. As they round the last curve in the road they are discussing the weather which has turned chilly and the fact that there are more hunters out than they expected. The yellow gate is about a hundred yards ahead of them and in plain sight and Harry is about two steps ahead of Karen, when from off to his left Harry

hears a loud rifle shot. He turns as Karen falls to the ground. Horrified, he sees a gaping hole in her neck and bright red arterial blood gushing out.

Karen is the latest statistic in the worst type of hunting accident, a fatal.

Jim's day had started off not too badly. The extra Saturday had given him a final chance at getting a deer. He had done well in previous seasons, taking a couple of decent bucks and sometimes being glad for a doe. This year he'd had to work on the first days of both antlered and antlerless seasons. He hadn't seen a buck on either Saturday, but the statewide antlerless harvest had been light and the Game Commission had declared two extra days, Friday and Saturday, and Jim could hunt this Saturday.

He had driven back the dirt road and after passing several parked vehicles located a spot to pull off and park. He locked his car, crossed the road and hiked up the hill onto a food plot on the Game Lands. Jim had not hunted here often but had a reasonable idea of the lay of the land.

## **Hit A Tree**

Close to 10 o'clock he noticed a doe on the edge of the field. He fired once but hit a tree and the deer took off. He made sure he'd missed, then moved to the far edge of the overgrown field. About an hour later four does came up, and after checking them with his scope he fired three shots at the largest one. One bullet hit another tree, one hit the doe in the hip, and the last one hit another sapling, splintering it.

Jim ran to the place where he had hit the doe. He picked up a handful of deer hair and noticed a few drops of bright



**ARRIVING** on the scene within 20 minutes of the accident, I found that Mike and Steve had started the necessary procedures. They already had a two-page list of names, numbers, makes, models, calibers, descriptions, etc.

red blood. While he was studying the scene he heard a rifle shot off to his left, so he moved in that direction, looking for more sign of his crippled deer. This brought him down to a dirt road where he met another hunter who told him he had shot at a doe but missed. This hunter had also seen two deer cross the road and remarked that possibly one of them had been the one that he, Jim, had hit.

Jim showed the other hunter the deer hair he'd picked up and said he was going to try to track his crippled deer. He then dropped over the hill, passing within ten feet of the yellow gate that barred the road to all vehicles. Jim trailed his deer into a small bottom, across a narrow stream and slowly up the opposite bank. He was now intently watching ahead, excited, expecting momentarily to catch a glimpse of his deer. He had just paused for breath when off to his left about a hundred yards he glimpsed—what? A movement . . . brown . . . a shadow? Up comes the rifle!

Tan color in the scope. Motion. Squeeze the trigger. *Bang!*

Jim has now become a second statistic—a hunter who has killed a human being while hunting.

A bevy of Game Commission officers were settling up cases at the State Police barracks near Waynesburg, the county seat. Wildlife Conservation Officer Rod Ansell had already settled three and I had just finished the paper work on my third case. Both of us expected to take care of one more before going back on patrol. We each had several deputies on hand and at the moment everyone was relaxing over hot black coffee. We all overheard the radio dispatcher say something to the duty officer about a shooting. State Police Lieutenant John Davidson turned to us and said, "This might be a hunting accident." Everyone hoped it would turn out to be just a crank call, but we felt uneasy. Then a second radio message mentioned an ambulance response and all parties got



serious. The area described was in my district. I immediately dispatched Deputies Mike Lubich and Steve Dulik to the scene, tossed my paperwork into a briefcase and motioned to Deputy Doug Kerr, my traveling companion of the day. We took off.

Arriving on the scene within 20 minutes of the accident, I found that Mike and Steve had started the necessary procedures. They already had a two-page list of names, numbers, makes, models, calibers, descriptions, etc. Phil Carter, the Cumberland Township police department officer, had secured the area and was checking all vehicles entering and leaving the scene. He was allowing only official traffic to enter the narrow congested site. The State Police were assisting also, although it was an obvious hunting accident and thus technically the responsibility of the Game Commission.

Deputy Ed Smith started photographing the accident, the wound, the scene, position, area, etc., even as Greg Rohanna, the deputy coroner, appeared and commenced his chores. Deputies conducted interviews, took measurements, roped off areas. . . . The tedious leg work was beginning. It would last for a long time. Land Manager Dick Belding arrived to assist, and Deputy Blaine Casseday took off to find a metal detector to assist in the search for evidence. Now all pitched in to the task of reconstructing the details leading up to the fatal shooting.

Questioning revealed that immediately after the shooting Harry had knelt to assist Karen. For an instant, he said, he'd thought she had tripped and fallen. Then he saw she had been shot. After a moment of disbelief he stood up and, seeing Jim over in the bottom, shouted, "Did you shoot?"

Jim's reply was negative. Harry told us that as Jim came up out of the bottom he glanced over, saw Karen's body, and started walking down the road. Two other hunters passed Jim as they hurried up to assist Harry, who was now in shock. Jim continued walking toward his vehicle. Another hunter driving fast



to summon an ambulance passed him on the road. Jim got into his vehicle, a tan Chevy, and drove away. He passed through a small village, several stop signs, a traffic intersection, many business places, and into the next county. There he stopped and did call to request an ambulance. He was notified that one was already on the way. He did not reveal his identity. Jim drove on home. It was now 1 p.m.

### Long and Tedious Search

The bullet that struck Karen had passed through a one-inch sapling, grazed a three-foot beech tree, then struck Karen in the throat. A line was passed from the sapling to the mark on the beech, establishing a direct line of bullet path. After a long and tedious search, this line led to a fired cartridge case lying on top of the leaves. It was a 7mm Remington Magnum.

Interviews with hunters at the camp up the closed road revealed that six shots had been heard. One, then considerably later three together, then one from a camp member's 30-06, then one more from the far side of the hill. That meant our offender might have fired five shots. We had found one case, so assumed four others were out there somewhere.

After checking statements, names, etc., we realized we had identified everyone in the general area but one—the guy who had left the scene and walked down the road.

The area where that man had parked was checked. Measurements of tire tracks were taken and now we were attempting the seemingly impossible task

# IT'S THE LAW



## Question

Being an avid waterfowl hunter, I am aware that using real corn to attract waterfowl is not only unethical, it is also illegal; but, is the use of plastic corn legal?

## Answer

No, any artificial or natural bait used to attract wildlife is prohibited by law.

of tracking a vanished suspect's trail without any clues except statements taken from other hunters.

On Sunday morning, after hours of searching, Steve and Mike came up with four more fired 7mm Remington Magnum cases. They also found where two more bullets had buried themselves in trees. A chainsaw and a hatchet retrieved these bullets. One of the other bullets had struck another sapling and blown up completely, shattering into fragments. The fifth bullet was never found, but apparently was the one that wounded the deer.

## Five Fired Cases

At 9 o'clock Sunday morning, twenty-one hours after the shooting, the officers working on the case got together to take stock of the situation. We had five fired 7mm Remington Magnum cases, including one retrieved from the direct line of fire. Two whole bullets had been removed from trees and another in fragments. One bullet apparently was still in a deer.

A call came in from Coroner Frank Behm. The requested X-ray of Karen's body revealed a metal object high in her right shoulder. After a post-mortem the

final bullet was in our possession. We also had descriptions from several hunters of the man who had left the area, all essentially identical. However, we had no name and no license number. We were at an apparent dead end.

By now there were lots of phone calls from TV, radio, and newspaper reporters, all wanting facts. We told them what we could.

About 10 a.m. I answered a call. The night before I had called everyone we'd talked to at the scene, requesting them to review the day's events in their minds and if anything new turned up to please call. This call was from a man who thought he might know the hunter he had seen walking away. The caller had hardly slept all night, he told me. Early in the morning he made some phone calls and came up with a name—Jim. He had called Jim and told him that he was wanted by us. Jim said he would call me. Within moments the phone rang again. It was Jim. He wanted to talk to me. I asked where he lived and said I would see him at his home.

Steve, Mike and I drove to Jim's residence. There we met a nervous, very concerned man of 29. Prior to our talk I read the "Miranda" rights to Jim. He responded that he understood and agreed to give statements, answer questions, and would voluntarily submit his firearm for a ballistics examination. His wife, several family members and two friends, one of them a police officer, were all present. Routine questions, routine answers. Except for a few additions, we heard an account that was essentially a walk-through of our 24-hour investigation. Now down to the moment of truth, his fifth shot.

"I looked toward the road," he said. "I saw a doe. I fired my fifth shot . . . heard a guy screaming . . . went up. He was cursing . . . running up and down the road. I saw the girl . . . went for help. No, I didn't return. I thought I might have fired the fatal shot but sort of blacked out. I don't remember much after calling the ambulance."

At that point he hesitated and mentioned something about possibly con-



**THE AREA** where the man had parked was checked. Measurements of the tire tracks were taken and now we were attempting the seemingly impossible task of tracking a suspect's trail without any clues except statements taken from other hunters.

tacting an attorney. I immediately terminated the interview.

Driving back to my office, I mentally reviewed the situation. One moment of carelessness and a young woman, the mother of five, was dead. Her companion was suffering the traumatic loss of someone he cared for. The offender was scarred by memories he would relive for years. In all likelihood, he faced, at the very least, a large fine. What does one say, think? Victim shouldn't have been walking in woods . . . in camouflage . . . wearing no blaze orange. Why not? She was not a hunter. She had a right to walk wherever, whenever, she pleased. Offender should not have shot. How many times have we told hunters to be sure of their targets, to watch their lines of fire? What does one say? Do?

It is exactly four months later as I write this. Spring gobbler season is upon us. Last season's happenings—its successes, failures, trophies and deer stories—are all now dim memories. Thoughts now are of gardens, trout stocking, grass cutting, and late frost.

One person still relives that season. Jim has just walked out of a pre-court session. He has just paid \$6800 in fines, \$102.50 in costs, had his rifle confiscated, and had his Pennsylvania hunting privileges revoked for 25 years. He is down and beat, but he tries to retain some semblance of order.

At one meeting Jim told me that after the shot he just blacked out, that he was in shock and didn't know what he was doing. He said he didn't recall a single happening after he saw Karen's body on the road. He knew this sounded like a



cop-out but said his mind went blank. With a look that came from the bottom of his soul, Jim said, "If after all this is over, if any good could come out of this, if there is any way my story could keep anyone else from having to live through what I am going through — if there is any way to help prevent something like this from happening again — please let me know."

It's not a pretty story. There's no happy ending. But it's true — an anatomy of a hunting accident.

This is a true story. However, to save further pain to the individuals involved, the names Karen, Harry and Jim are fictitious in this account.



**GUFF is a French brittany, but though there are no ruffed grouse in France, he *knew* the first time grouse stink drifted downwind from him.**

## *Life and Death and October*

**By Joel M. Vance**

**I** SUPPOSE the scientific-minded would explain it by refraction of light through water droplets. But when I saw a rainbow in an otherwise clear sky, whose end dipped right into the little town I grouse hunt out of, and if I believed in omens, that would have been one.

Of course, I'm not superstitious—knock on wood . . .

Guff, the brittany, too was staring at the rainbow. Who's to say dogs don't believe in Santa Claus?

For ten years, the area around the little town has produced grouse when other areas were suffering the rags of the traditional rags-or-riches grouse cycle.

You can hunt grouse in snow, but the

real grouse season is from mid-October through November 1, maybe a little later in a clement year.

October is clear, sharp days, sunny to the point of being too warm in the afternoon. October is when I come alive after the oppressiveness of summer. As an added incentive, woodcock haven't fled south, and the fringes of bogs and the aspen slopes promise both them and grouse.

Save the pines for when the snow flies. Look for aspen sprout thickets, especially if they contain dense growth of gray dogwood, a shrub with red stems and creamy yellow berries that are much favored by October grouse.

I favor alder bogs rimmed with what foresters call "early succession aspen."



**GROUSE and woodcock live in sprout thickets that threaten your face and eyes with every step. Footing almost always is rough—blowdowns, rocks, ruts and other pitfalls make walking a risky venture.**

Young stuff. Walk the log trails and send your dog into the pockets on either side of the trail.

Often, the trail will be along a ridge-top with bogs on either side. Let the dog run whichever hill slope has the most sprout growth on it and be ready to shoot at any time. Grouse are spooky birds at best, and on a dry or windy day, they often flush wild. Beware of shooting at low-flying birds lest you sluice Ol' Toby in hot pursuit.

Woodcock are a bonus bird for the October grouse hunter and a joy for the dog because they sit tight for a point. It takes an exceptional dog to pin grouse with any regularity, but any dog with a good nose can hold a woodcock, which looks to its camouflage rather than its wings.

The same shot load works equally well for either game bird, as does the same shotgun. My favorite is a 26-inch L.C. Smith double barrel. It is bored improved cylinder and modified, but some hunters favor more open chokes. I shoot 7½ shot in a field or game load (you do *not* need high brass, high power loads for grouse). Other hunters favor No. 8 and those who concentrate on woodcock often shoot No. 9, operating on the theory that the more shot you put in the air, the more chance of hitting something.

They disprove this theory often, but cling to it anyway.

Almost any hunting dog can be adapted to hunting grouse and woodcock. My hunting pard used a black Lab for many years. Dixie worked close enough to flush grouse within shooting range, and Ted always could tell when she was winding birds and was ready to shoot when one flushed.

Another pal has a bouncing springer spaniel, a flushing dog that works well on grouse and woodcock. I hunt behind a Brittany spaniel, a pointing dog. Well-known outdoor writer Nick Sisley, who



has written several excellent how-to books on grouse and woodcock, hunts behind pointers, so take your pick.

Ted can't meet me until noon, but I choose to work out the kinks of the long drive by myself.

The cabin is icy in the early morning. I turned off the gas heater to sleep because it knows only two settings—off and full-blast. Freeze or fry. Guff lets out one sharp bark that makes my ears ring. He knows why we are here. Of course, the gun case, brush pants, age-softened chamois shirt and shell vest are more clues than even a dense bird dog needs, and Guff is smart and often reads my mind.

### Check Out My Gear

It's been almost a year, so I check out my hunting gear: compass, pocketknife for gutting birds, handkerchief for cold-loosened sinuses, license, bunch of caramels for both the dog and me to stave off hypoglycemia, jug of apple juice (there's no finer drink after a hard hunt), cheese, summer sausage and crackers for tailgate lunch.

Yellow-lens shooting glasses are necessary for both better visibility and for eye safety. Grouse and woodcock live in sprout thickets that threaten your face and eyes with every step.

Footing almost always is rough—blowdowns, rocks, ruts and other pitfalls make walking a risky venture. I suppose the cautious would advise against hunting alone because of the possibility of injury far from help, but I like to hunt alone. Wouldn't hurt to let someone know where you'll be, though.

Ted will join me at noon, so if I break an ankle in the Wagonwheel, I won't have to suffer for long.

The Wagonwheel is ten miles west of town. That's the only clue to my favorite covert you're going to get. Okay, I'll pin it down for you. It is west of the Atlantic Coast and east of the Mississippi, south of Canada and north of the Mason-Dixon Line. Geez, some people need to be led by the hand. . . .

The fellow across the road has his mailbox mounted on an old wagonwheel. He has been building a house for ten years, apparently using material salvaged from the city dump. The house is an awesome crazy-quilt of mismatched parts, looking like something out of a pizza nightmare, so we hunt to the incessant sound of hammering. I don't know if he's adding to what is already there or is frantically planting nails to keep the existing structure from collapsing.

I drop a couple of 16-gauge, No. 7½

shot shells into the chambers of the old Smith. All obsolete or nearly so. Why is it that everything I cherish is obsolete? Smith has been out of business for more than 30 years. The 16-gauge is poised on the brink of extinction and you have to pay premium prices for No. 7½ loads.

Every time I go grouse hunting I feel as if I were taking a 50-year step into the past. I listen for the spirit of Burton Spiller, but all I hear is the distant pounding of the carpenter working on his Frankensteinian Monster Mansion.

The Wagonwheel is its usual profusion of tangled alder, threaded with pole-size aspen in the higher spots, occasional patches of gray dogwood, their red stems and creamy berries a neon marker of probable grouse occupancy.

Guff is a French Brittany, but though there are no ruffed grouse in France, he *knew* the first time grouse stink drifted downwind to him. Still, it took him five years to learn absolute immobility, no matter what the bird does. He used to think he could slip close-in on grouse, the way he does on woodcock, but he eventually figured out that he couldn't glue them to the end of his nose, that grouse are boogery birds who are as apt to walk carefully away from a point as they are to squat immobile.

A few times Guff spotted birds on the ground and figured they were cripples to be chased down and caught. It took some indepth explanation at the top of my voice to teach him to ignore the evidence of his eyes.

Now I am one with this eager little red-and-white dog who sprints through the tangle, mindless of rips and bruises, who quivers on point as if he would explode with suppressed energy. His front feet splay and his head is thrown high, lips parted to help him whuffle the wondrous grouse smell, like a wine taster inhaling vintner's special reserve. Grouse-stink is vintage wine, sharp and clean in the October sunshine.



**THE WAGONWHEEL** is ten miles west of town. That's the only clue to my favorite covert you're going to get. Okay, I'll pin it down for you. It's . . .



We move deeper into the tangle of the Wagonwheel and I can feel my muscles becoming pleasantly taut after the inactivity of the long drive.

The first grouse is at the base of a little hillside and he flushes wild just as the dog catches his scent and starts to react. I see a flash of gray and mount and shoot in the same instant. No time to plan the shot. So often that's the case with grouse. The open shot, time to sense flight path, rise, sight pattern, is rare. More often the fleeting glimpse of movement in the thicket and the muffled drumbeat of wings is all we get.

Rule of thumb is that if you can see it you can kill it. Shoot and estimate where the bird would fall if the shot took it. Grouse are not hard to kill if you can hit them. They often are, however, extremely tough to hit.

This bird was a survivor, for I see the shot rip a visible pattern in the pines through which the bird is flying, but there is no faint thump of bird falling to earth and Guff gives no indication the bird had dropped and run. Guff is good at finding dead and crippled birds that I didn't know were there, so if he says the cupboard is empty, we move on.

We follow the estimated line of flight. The bird, after a first flush, almost certainly will be within a hundred yards.

This time the point is solid, at the base of a blowdown, and I move in, confident that the exercised bird won't be quite as quick to flush. He comes out the other side of the blowdown, low and in the open, and it is a fairly easy shot (considering that the way I shoot, no shot is easy). The bird tumbles dead and Guff pounces on it, realizes it is dead, and brings it to me.

There always is a moment of tribute after each grouse we kill. A silent smoothing of the feathers, simple tactile contact with the still-warm bird. Plump and limp, a gray phase.

Most northern grouse are gray phase,

but there is the occasional red bird, rich and beautiful—perhaps the ultimate grouse, for red birds make their drab gray counterparts look dowdy by comparison.

I head for the back side of the Wagonwheel, knowing that it will be fresh hunting territory. While the occasional hunter may share the part along the road, no one works hard enough to get to the back side where there is a thicket of gray dogwood, whose berries are meat-and-potatoes for grouse in October. It's partly bogland to get to the hillside where the dogwood grows and all tough walking. Most hunters don't like to work that hard, and this is the only secret weapon a dedicated bird hunter has—to walk farther and hunt harder than the fellow just before or the one to follow.

### Move in Behind

Guff leans away from bird scent, whuffling, and I move in behind him. A woodcock augurs toward a hole in the aspens, wings twittering, and I shoot it. Woodcock are, perhaps, my favorite bird. Designed by a committee, looking as if they shouldn't be able to fly, avian bumblebees. They're wonderful little



**OCTOBER** is when I come alive. As an added incentive, woodcock haven't fled south, and the fringes of bogs and the aspen slopes promise both them and grouse.



birds with personality. No bird is more balletic in the spring sky, nor puts on a better show for his mates.

Guff is muddy and has a bloody tear on his eartip—he wears a scab the year round on his ears. But his enthusiasm is undimmed, little warrior of the back bogs.

We squish through the mucky ground

**WOODCOCK** are, perhaps, my favorite bird. Designed by a committee, looking as if they shouldn't be able to fly, avian bumblebees. They're wonderful.

and finally see the spray of fallen gold leaves, the trunks of the young aspens ahead. I walk the bog edge, let the dog zigzag up the hillside to where a thick stand of pines gives the ridge a Mohawk haircut.

Maybe it's a sixth sense; maybe it's experience; maybe it's luck, but sometimes I simply *know* where a grouse is hiding. A substantial aspen has fallen ahead and it's crooked trunk creates an arch beneath which I am sure there is a bird.

Guff slithers down the hill, catches a hint and pirouettes awkwardly, bent almost in a U-shape, facing the blow-down. He confirms my intuition. Solid point. I pause to enjoy the sweet sight for a moment, then move in.

It is a red bird, its russet fan daubed rich against the dark pines as it heads for deep cover. But the old gun comes up nicely and I pitch the bird, with a thump and a dying quiver, into the leaves at the hilltop.

I whistle Guff in, take the bird and let him inhale its rich scent. I smooth its feathers and sit for a while on the blow-down and think about life and death and October. . . .



**FINE ART** prints of *Autumn Beauties*, shown here in its entirety, are available. Each of the 500 signed and numbered prints measures 20 by 14 inches and costs \$43, delivered. Order from: Nick Rosato, RD 1, Box 407, Cogan Station, PA 17728.





**TREES AND COVER** are important to raccoons and gray foxes. But why? Raccoons and grays depend on cover and trees to escape surprises in the night.

## Coons, Grays and Cover

By Joe Kosack

**T**HERE'S A knack to trapping raccoons and gray foxes, but most trappers don't have the patience to learn and eventually exploit it. Maybe we can change that.

It would be fair to say that at least half of the raccoons I have bagged over the years came from sets along creeks no wider than five feet. The other 50 percent came from wooded swamps, wetlands and along creeks about 10 to 20 feet wide. Less than 20 percent of the ringtails I've trapped came from areas without trees or substantial cover. The same holds true for grays, except that I tend to take a few more grays along trails shrouded with cover and near forest edges than at streamside sets. So I have proven to myself that trees and cover are important to these critters. But why?

Considering mature raccoons and grays can be explosive aggressors if cornered, ones that can put the hurts to just about anything four- or two-legged in Penn's Woods, you would think these two furbearers might throw caution to the wind as they make their nightly rounds. But collectively they don't. Sure, a few coons or grays may ransack a backyard garbage can or raid a barnyard for fowl, but you can safely bet that these late-night raiders didn't rush right in for the goods; they looked and listened first, then slowly moved in using any cover available.

Raccoons and grays depend on cover and trees to escape surprises in the night. Common sense, therefore, tells me that these creatures will be found more frequently in areas designed by

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## **GAME NEWS**

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nature to offer them protection. For instance, raccoons and gray foxes often have well-worn trails along creeks flowing through areas clogged with multi-flora rose bushes because the vegetation provides excellent cover for them and shelters many forms of prey. Moreover, as grays and ringtails can and will climb trees to escape pursuit, it makes sense that they feel more comfortable when they're near these vertical escape outlets.

### **Biggest Concern**

Probably the biggest concern these two species have when they step out in the night is that they may have a run-in with a car, person, dog or eastern coyote. And each year the odds of one of these critters having an encounter with an auto, person or large canine seem to increase because of residential development, the escalating number of abandoned dogs, and the state's growing population of eastern coyotes.

Still, the predators of today, barring the car, are not anymore intimidating to the raccoon and gray fox than Pennsylvania's past predators. Surely an Indian, mountain lion or wolf would have raised just as many hairs on the back of a gray and send it head over paws in the direction of safety as would a wild dog, so it stands to reason that the raccoons and grays of yesterday were not much different than those of today. In short, back then most of these critters stayed within close range of cover or concealment just as they do today.

Based on years of success in such areas I have come to expect big yields of raccoons on creeks and along the edges of cornfields that are bordered by thick vegetation or big trees. You can, too. All

you have to do is prospect in these areas before season just as you would other locations of easier access. But be warned, trapping isn't as easy when you leave the beaten trail.

The first lesson in learning to trap near or in natural cover is to step out of the regimented rut you've been trapping in for far too long. When you see briar bushes and saplings blocking your way to a small stream, walk, dive or crawl into their midst to check for dung and tracks on the creek's sandbars and shoreside paths. Don't walk around or away from this thick stuff.

But before you walk in, look for locations inside the thicket that will appeal to a coon or fox—a big tree, a creek intersection, a fallen tree that spans the creek, a rock pile—and then head for one of them. If the first location doesn't pan out, walk out, focus on another location and head in again. Eventually, you'll find a very obvious trail or high interest area that's bound to produce fur.

As many sportsmen know, animals on the move don't expend any more energy than they have to. So when coons and grays travel through such thickets, they almost always use the same trails, not necessarily because they're creatures of habit, but rather, creatures of experience. For instance, the trail offers the quietest possible path for stalking, not to mention the path of least resistance. So if these two furbearers are using the thickets, their trails should illustrate this.

Focal points in thickets are also great places to bag furbearers because they are naturally attracted to such sites. For example, a towering oak, pine or walnut tree amid a sea of saplings will lure coons because of its playing, lounging, safety and food-finding possibilities, especially if any portion of the tree is hollow. Grays, on the other hand, like to sniff around fallen trees, creek snags, old rotting stumps and groundhog dens.

When you scout these high interest locations, look for tracks, diggings, claw scratches in tree bark and on the surface of weather-worn logs, leftovers from a previous meal, and clean-swept paths.



To find these signs you may need to crawl under briars or a fallen tree, or walk in water that threatens to spill into your hipboots. But once your thorough efforts begin to bear fruit, you'll start smiling as you head into these hard-to-reach spots. After all, the dividends for this difficult work are extremely gratifying.

When you get into areas showing signs of gray and coon activity, the next step is to determine which furbearers you want to trap for. If you'd like to trap grays and raccoons, then dirtholes should be planted at trail and creek intersections, under mast trees and exposed root systems, and at small clearings. I usually place about five sets an acre on land where critter activity is high. In average areas, I'll make two or three dirtholes per acre, along the main travelways.

To increase my chances of attracting furbearers, I squirt a scent trail from the travelway to the dirtholes. Also, I do not camouflage the sets. After all, these areas are the last place I expect to have problems with a trap thief, and besides, the extra sight appeal of exposed dirt at the sets augments their attractiveness to critters.

If you plan some cold weather coon trapping in these thickets, set your traps in moving water or where springs bubble to the surface so they won't freeze. At such locations I use a set selection that comprises about 50 percent cubby and pocket sets with the remainder being trail sets. The trail sets are usually placed in locations where a coon trail enters the water at the shoreline, or where a trail funnels the furbearer through a narrow passage.

If you decide not to use scent trails at your baited set locations, then your sets should be constructed so the wind will drift over the set toward the furbearer travelway. Here in Penn's Woods, the

wind blows predominantly from the northwest to southeast during trapping season, except during rainy weather when it blows from the south or southwest.

Using the wind to appeal to furbearers is a proven method that has led to many successful seasons for veteran trappers and it is one of the sport's fundamental concepts. So give the wind and your set locations some thought before you set your traps. To do otherwise is like trying to construct a house without a blueprint.

Should you decide that dodging thorns and ducking branches has its advantages, then you'll soon find yourself looking for ways to minimize the ouches endured on your way into these thickets. I wear a pair of old hipboots, thick blue jeans, a windbreaker type jacket and a pair of leather gloves. My hat is left in the car when I enter such places; long ago I got tired of picking it up every ten feet. A walking stick and a pair of pruning shears are also handy items to have along to swat away branches and to cut through those that are impassable.

Overall, trapping in thickets, around trees and near cover should increase the yield of any coon and gray fox trapper. It is a method that revolves around the very nature of these furbearers and it truly works. So give it a try; all you have to do is leave the beaten trail and the competition to your rear. The rest will come naturally.

**AS MANY** sportsmen know, animals on the move don't expend any more energy than they have to. So when coons and grays travel through such thickets, they almost always use the same trails.



# Ducks I Remember

By D. I. Burkhart

IT WAS A large flock of wood ducks, about 30. Their wings cleaved the evening still with a roaring whoosh, clearly audible as they swept past. Five minutes later the performance was repeated as another, slightly smaller bunch coursed the creek bottom threading their way towards some predetermined roost.

At one point along the water's edge lightning had killed an ancient buttonwood and the branches spilled out into the shallows, forming a huge snag. It was from behind this that four eyes furtively monitored the birds' activity, keeping careful tally of species and approximate numbers.

I remember that score keeping distinctly because two of the eyes behind those branches, the 14-year-old pair, were mine. Duck season was still five days away but success at that spot seemed a sure bet.

So began my introduction to the world of waterfowl hunting. Ever since, I've been hooked—maybe even addicted, if you believe some people—on chasing ducks. And although it's been over 20 years since that evening on the creek, I still marvel at how those woodies rocketed by my uncle and me, twisting through the tree branches as they went.

My initial experiences proved priceless as they happened, fortunately, at a time when there were a lot more ducks and places to hunt them. You could call them the good ole' days. They really were, too.

My solo hunting forays began as soon as I turned 16, when I was able to hunt by myself. Although I grew up in a hunting family my Father could never hunt much more than on weekends. My responsibilities, however, were more lax, allowing me to haunt the local backwaters and creeks for teal and wood ducks on almost a daily basis. A little

later on I began gunning for mallards and black ducks on the Susquehanna. Once I got my driver's license there was no safe place for ducks. I remember numbering among the camouflaged army that converged on Delaware for October goose hunting. Flights of wigeon and gadwalls gave me the slip in Maryland. The ruddies swarmed like bumble bees over the upper Delaware bay as I waited there and watched for black ducks. And bluebill decoys embraced the cold clear waters of southern Ontario, where the eerie laughter of loons in the pre-dawn blackness made my spine tingle.

Out of such a vast reservoir of memories it is amazing that so many individual events have remained so crystal clear over the years.

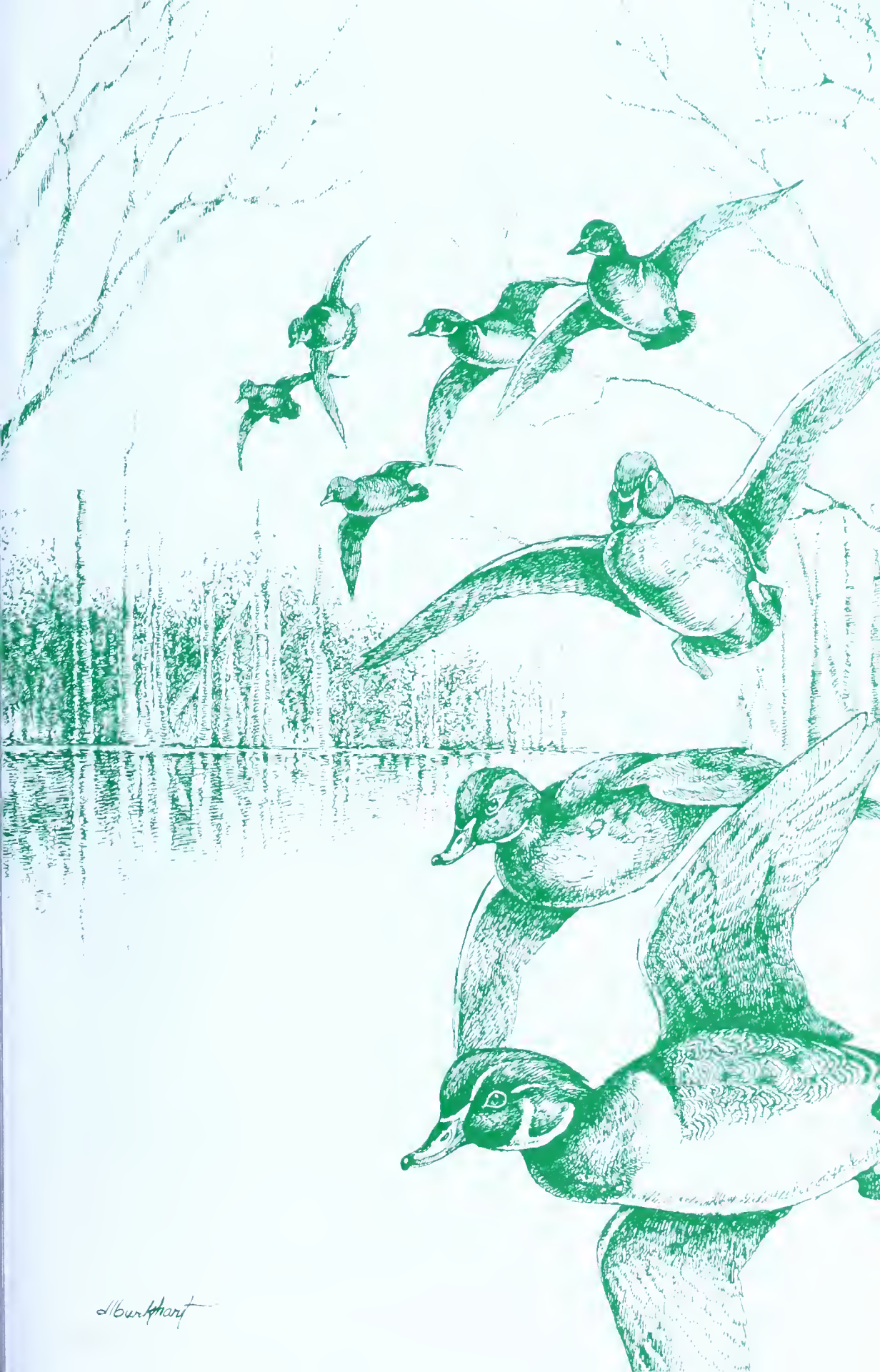
## First Black Duck

During the first two seasons I pursued waterfowl, I found myself to be a pretty fair shot on small woodies and other targets. When it came to larger birds, however, I seemed to have an unconscious block. Even easy opportunities on mallards eluded me.

One day after school I decided to hunt a wooded pond near home. It was well into the season and most of the wood ducks were long gone, but with the indubitable optimism of a teenager, I figured I'd maybe get lucky. The place was really neat, anyway, reminding me of pictures I'd seen of the White River near Stuttgart, Arkansas—where all the mallards are. Besides, as I didn't yet own a boat, and some kind soul had left an old beat up wooden one at the pond that was fair game for anybody to use.

From where I parked the old gray Rambler it was a pretty good hike back in to reach "the lake," as the spot was colloquialized. When I finally arrived a careful surveillance didn't detect anything, but the edges were thick and of-





H. Burkhardt

fered a million hiding places. I'd really no more than started around the first cove when a single jumped up, its large sooty colored body and flashing white underwings identifying it as a black duck. At the boom of the 12-bore the duck magically fell, but it hadn't been well centered and went down with only a broken wing. The bird hit the water just outside of gunshot range and started swimming toward the far shore. I ran for the boat and even after I managed to get it into the water it took 45 minutes of poling over mudflats, plus eleven more shells, before I finally collected my prize. Not a very tidy way to finish, granted, but a most memorable experience nonetheless. Even the bruise on my shoulder from those magnum shells didn't diminish the heady sense of personal achievement I felt that day. I had finally bagged a "big duck."



### More Black Ducks

A lot of waterfowlers have their favorite species, but I prefer a variety when I go fowling. In armchair sessions, however, when the talk gets around to intelligence of species, it is the blacks that usually get the nod.

Shortly after I turned 19 my partner and I began to make our own decoys. They were the molded polystyrene type, and it was my job as artist to transform the newly created white clones into the realistic Judas' goats we needed for the upcoming season. Allowing for our age, we got only about a half-dozen before that year's season began.

It was ironic that the first time we tried them we were without guns. But at the same time, that might have been helpful because we were able to devote full attention to the business of bird watching without worrying about gun handling or shooting.

The evening before the opener found us motoring out to the blind to make sure of last minute details and to set decoys for the next morning's hunt. Of course, the new decoys went along, as we were anxious to see them on the water. After arriving at the island and getting them properly positioned we did think they looked good, too. I had put the super deluxe paint job on them, the kind I wish I had time for nowadays.

Anyway, about a half an hour before sunset flocks of hooded mergansers started criss-crossing the sky, with an occasional squadron of ring-necked ducks thrown in here and there. It was a pair of blacks that really made the evening special, though.

**A LOT of waterfowlers have their favorite species, but I prefer a variety when I go fowling. In armchair sessions, however, when the talk gets around to intelligence of species, it is the blacks that usually get the nod.**

We had our duck calls along, but the two blacks didn't require much coaxing as they were fairly low to begin with. After they had set in and gotten a drink they paddled right over to the decoys. One bird seemed particularly sociable and swam within two feet of one of our precision fakes. For a few moments everything was fine, but when the bird tilted its head and took a really close look, things began to fall apart. Her



head shot up as she turned tail and rapidly peddled for the open water away from the decoys. As she went she announced her suspicions with loud quacks of alarm. It was curious to note that this behavior didn't seem to have any effect on the other bird which was contentedly preening and oiling its feathers about 20 yards from where we sat hiding. Our newly educated friend, however, never did get over her fears. She remained outside the set and voiced her displeasure until darkness finally forced us to leave. As we vacated the blind both ducks spooked and hurried off into the night.

That illustrates just how well really good decoys can be expected to perform. I'd rather have a dozen like that than twice as many of the indifferent ones I see some gunners handicap themselves with.

The more I write, the more memories surface. I recall a time in Ontario when



a mink tried to make off with a wing-tipped cripple. I remember bluebird days and weather so cold and raw that the wind-blown spray froze in my hair and on everything else it hit. Leaky boots and boats, and broken fan belts on cars are other vivid memories, along with balky outboards and frighteningly cruel windchills. Mostly, however, I remember the ducks. The days that they flew and the days that they didn't.

It's these memories that forever keep calling me when the autumn gold rustles in the chilly breeze.

## PGC 25-Year Club

*Pennsylvania Game Commission personnel have compiled an enviable record among public and conservation agencies for longevity of service. Few organizations in any area of endeavor can boast so many dedicated employees. The most recent PGC employees to complete 25 years of service are shown here.*



**Glenn Hoy**  
Chief, Exhibits Division  
Manheim



**Roman Stadler**  
Equipment Operator  
Erie



**Bob Shaffer**  
WCO Greene County  
Carmichaels



**MY BIGGEST** ambition as a hunter was to bag this wily wondrous bird. Even if I bagged only one grouse my entire life, I would have been happy.

## Grouching Around

By Dale R. Young

**G**ROUSE. That word, or, more precisely, the feathered fury of an animal all hunters think of when they hear it, has haunted me for nine years. My biggest ambition as a hunter was to bag this wily wondrous bird.

Even if I bagged only one grouse my entire life, I would have been happy. I remember, as a young boy, when my father would come home from a day in the woods with his friends and, more often than not, have more tales of grouse that got away than he would have birds in his game bag. That helped me form the opinion that Dad was a lousy shot. After all, he couldn't even knock such a big bird out of the air with a shotgun. Well, like I said, I was a young boy then,

and once I started hunting, my opinion of dad's shooting abilities turned completely around. I would be hard pressed to name anybody that I honestly thought could shoot better than my father.

It didn't take long to find out that a grouse is quite a bit more than a small extremely hard-to-hit bird. I was the ripe old age of 12 when I flushed my first grouse. To say it took me by surprise would be a gross understatement. When I asked dad what it was that I had just scared out (or vice versa) my knees were still a little wobbly. He looked at me with a knowing smile and said, "Son, you've just seen your first grouse. Kinda takes your breath away, doesn't it? But



I'd be willing to bet you'll never forget it."

I nodded my head in response, not wanting to admit that it had also almost given me a heart attack. Now I could understand why Dad brought home more stories than he did grouse. I wondered how anyone, at the sound of those thundering wings lifting up through the tree limbs, could maintain enough composure to actually try to shoot one of those little brown devils.

Over the years, through personal experience and Dad's instructions, I learned quite a few of the grouse's tricks. Among the first things I learned about them was that (A) they don't like being shot at. Therefore (B) they don't give you much of a chance to shoot at them. Another thing I learned was that they also seem to enjoy waiting for when you unload your gun to climb over a fence or dead tree to then very casually fly right over your head at a leisurely pace, leaving you standing there and only watching them.

It was that kind of behavior that actually had me considering giving up on grouse and concentrating on easier game, rabbits and ringnecks. But, at every opportunity, I was out there in the woods, busting brush and thicket alike, in the hopes the next grouse I saw would be my first to bag.

Years went by and I had yet to get a grouse. Not that I hadn't seen any, mind you, I just couldn't get any of them in my game bag. Every year, along with the rest of my family, I practiced with claybirds in readiness for what we all referred to as "grouse season." My eighth year hunting was no exception. I must have shot up to 20 boxes of shells through my Remington 870 12-gauge at claybirds alone. I was hoping that all of the practice would help me out when the time came to bead in on those wily little birds.

Unfortunately, all my practice went for naught. Between work and other commitments, I didn't have much time to hit the woods. And when I did, the birds must have known I had been practicing because they never flew my way.



Oh, I got my share of other game that year, maybe even enough to compensate for not getting a grouse. And I even made some nice shots getting them. But I was still disappointed when the season ended and I had no grouse tails on the wall to show for it.

I did come close one time that year. Dad, I, and Duchess, our black Lab, had just worked a very nasty piece of bramble brush and were feeling the effects of it, so Dad called for a halt. I had just, very thankfully, leaned back against a young oak tree when Dad motioned me to watch Duchess. Yep, she was on to something all right. I stood up and waited for the action. I didn't wait long, though, before Duchess flushed a grouse about 20 yards in front of, and directly between Dad and me. It must have known of my reputation, for instead of going straight out or cutting in front of Dad like they usually do, it cut across in front of me. I guess it knew where its best bet *lay*. I thought to myself, this is it; this is going to be my first grouse! I pulled up, trying to ignore the sounds of his thundering wings beating their way through the air and my heart beating through the walls of my chest. I got him in my sights and pulled the trigger . . .

Now, with my mind totally fixed on shooting this bird, I had forgotten all about the tree I had been resting against when Duchess flushed him out. Forgotten that is until my barrel bounced rather sharply off of it at the same instant I pulled the trigger. I missed him by at least 15 feet. I swear I could hear him laughing as he flew off to join his



friends. I looked at Dad and just shrugged. Dad slowly shook his head and began laughing so hard I was afraid I would have to carry him out of the woods.

The following year I joined the Navy. I was afraid I would be missing a lot of grouse hunting during my enlistment. After going through boot camp and a year of extensive schooling in Memphis, Tennessee, my commanding officer told me I had 30 days leave coming. I checked with Dad when I got home and learned that I would have only three days of grouse hunting before I had to report to Norfolk, Virginia, for duty. Well, I practiced a great deal over the

next few weeks, trying to get as much speed and accuracy as I could into my shooting. Even Dad seemed to be impressed with the way I was shooting. I just had to get a grouse this year. Because of my school in Memphis, I had missed all of my ninth season, and I couldn't bear the thought of not being able to bag a grouse in ten years. That's a decade! It would also be humiliating.

The weatherman was predicting a beautiful day with some frost for the opener. Sure enough, the morning promised a beautiful fall day to come with quite a heavy frost on the ground. When I walked out to the kitchen I saw Dad getting ready for work. He said that he would probably be gone most of the day. (That's the curse of being a railroad engineer; they never know when they'll get called on.)

**THE GROUSE** were flushing way out in front of me. All I really saw that day was a gray squirrel that was trying his darndest to keep the tree he was climbing between him and me.

Needless to say, I ventured into the woods myself that day. It was beautiful all right, to look at and to enjoy, but it wasn't so great for trying to sneak through the woods. Between the frost and the dry leaves, the grouse had ample warning long before I became a hazard to them. They were flushing way out in front of me. All I really saw that day was a gray squirrel that was trying his darndest to keep the tree he was climbing between him and me. After about five minutes, he decided he'd had enough of that, jumped over to the next tree and crawled inside a big old hollow tree. It felt good to watch him in his antics. It gave me a feeling of peace and understanding of the woods in which he and his friends lived. Taking him home for the stew pot was the furthest thing from my mind. I was content just to watch him in his efforts to stay away from me. I went home with an empty game bag that night . . . but not an empty heart.

The following day was the same ex-



cept for two things. For one, Dad was with me; and secondly, we didn't even see a squirrel. I was beginning to resign myself to the fact that it would be another year before I would be able to bag a grouse. To make matters worse, while driving home the weatherman on the radio was forecasting heavy thunder-showers for the next day, and by the looks of the sky, he was right.

The next morning I woke up at 5:30. Not to the sound of my alarm, but to the brilliant flash of lightning and the hammering crash of thunder. I walked into the kitchen and saw Dad getting ready for work. That decided it. There would be no hunting today, and that meant I would have been outwitted by those wily brown birds for ten years running. I wondered if anyone else could claim such a record . . . I seriously doubt it.

Much to my relief, the rain let up around noon and the sun began beating its way through the clouds. By two o'clock the sun had regained its hold over the sky. If it hadn't been for the soaking wet ground, you wouldn't have been able to tell it had rained at all.

When Dad got home at 2:30 I was dressed in my hunting gear and had his all laid out for him. After he got dressed, we decided to hunt in the woods behind our house. We didn't have time to go anywhere else.

The area we were to hunt was the side of a mountain that has a gas line running straight up the middle of it. As we approached the area we noticed the sun was shining on the right hand side of the gas line. Dad figured the grouse would be there, taking advantage of the unexpected sunshine to dry their feathers and warm themselves up. He was right.

We climbed the left hand side of the gas line, figuring it would be easier to concentrate on shooting grouse if we didn't have to concentrate on climbing the mountain too. About three-fourths of the way up, Dad cut across the gas line to wait for me to get to the top and start down. I couldn't blame him. After all, it was quite a job trying to get up the

side of that mountain. Thank goodness the other side had a more gradual slope.

I quietly entered the woods on the other side of the gas line. With my ears tuned for the slightest noise, I started down the mountain. I came to a little knoll that had wild grapevines growing rampant all over it. I knew from past experience that this was a good spot for grouse and had myself completely ready to spring into action at the first sign of one. I got completely through it with no results and started heading for the edge of the knoll when I heard the all too familiar sound of thundering wings. Faster than I thought possible, my 12-gauge was in place, firmly resting against my cheek and shoulder with the safety off. I found him a split second later in my sights. Unfortunately, that's all he needed to get himself over the knoll towards Dad.

### Frozen In Place

I stood there, frozen in place, waiting for the reply from Dad's 20-gauge in answer to the challenge. A few seconds went by before I realized that Dad wasn't going to shoot. I decided that a few colorful remarks were in order just then. As the first remark came out, I heard a second explosion of wings which produced another grouse. He must have decided that he would follow his partner because he flew in the same direction — right into my sights.

You can imagine my surprise. For the first time in nine years, after I had tried everything I knew how to do to get a grouse in my sights, one put himself there for me. I was so surprised, I almost forgot to pull the trigger . . . Almost. With a loud bang and a huge puff of feathers, the bird dropped like a rock at the very top of the knoll. My quest was over. It had taken me nine, almost ten years, but it was done. Now I'm ready to take on a bigger challenge. Maybe I'll try to bag that big ol' tom turkey I've been hearing out behind the house for the last few months. With any luck it won't take quite as long.

## FOURTH NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP

*The National Rifle Association's Hunter Education Championship (NAHEC) is held annually at the town Gap north of Harrisburg. This year, 15 teams from 15 different provinces participated in the 3-day event. NAHEC is designed to be an educational experience for the youth of the NRA's Hunter Services Division. It is a chance for them to share their knowledge of the outdoors with each other. Here are a few scenes from the 1988 event.*

**EACH TEAM** was made up of five members and one coach. The senior division is for those 15 through 18 years of age; the junior division is for those 14 and younger.



**ORIENTEERING**, track and animal simulation, and wildlife identification highlight the outdoor skills trail.



**INCLUDING** participants, coaches, family members, volunteer staff members—some of whom traveled over 1000 miles—and other officials, over 400 attended the event.



**THE SIX** events included archery, rifle and shotgun shooting, a hunter safety trail, an outdoor skills trail, and a hunter responsibility written exam.





# ANNUAL HUNTER EDUCATION SHIPS

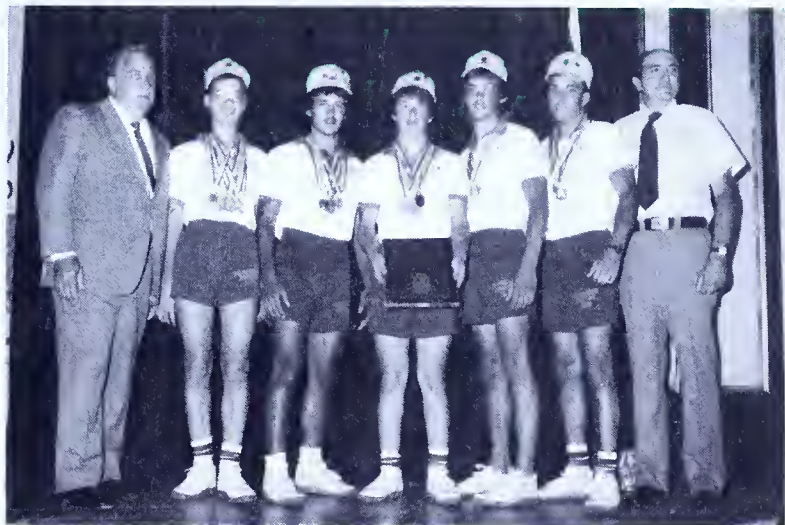
Annual North American Hunter  
as held last July, at Fort Indian-  
rom 11 states and one Canadian  
ent. Although competitive, the  
l event. As Jim Norine, Director  
said, "Our intent is to enhance  
the challenge their existing skills."  
NHEC.

PGC Photos by Bob Haines

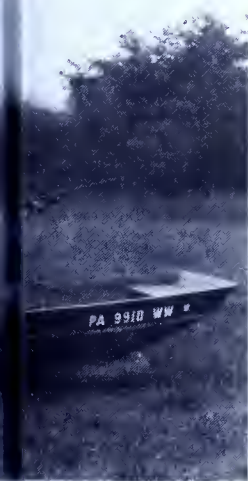


VIRGINIA'S team garnered first place honors in the junior division. The Utah and Pennsylvania teams came in second and third.

TOP HONORS in the senior division went to Pennsylvania's team. Coached by Dorian Monroe, Albion, team members include Robbie Carr, Dave Duda, Shaun Fawcett, and Dorian Monroe II, all from Albion, and Jay Pansky, East Springfield. They are flanked here by Richard Riley, left, NRA First Vice President, and PGC Deputy Executive Director Paul Weikel.



WHEN the Rhode Island team learned that the West Virginia team was going to be disqualified because two of their rifles didn't meet contest specifications, they graciously loaned them theirs. As a small token of their sportsmanship, North-central Region I&E Supervisor Harry Merz, left, presented each team member with a SPORT hat.



# FIELD NOTES

## Safety Conscious

**CAMBRIA COUNTY**—Anthony Sheron, Conemaugh, was buying seedling packets from me when he told me about some graduates of the Central Cambria Middle School's hunter-trapper education course. He was hunting in an open field when a rabbit ran between him and a group of young hunters. Even though the youngsters were over 100 yards away, not one of them even raised a gun. Anthony was so impressed with the boys' safe habits that he wanted me to relay his compliments to the boys' instructors. So, Mr. Mario Bono and Mr. Ron Ponchione, you're getting your message across.—WCO Lawrence A. Olsavsky, Colver.



## New Sounds

**BRADFORD COUNTY**—While jogging I try to identify all the bird calls I hear. The other day I heard a call that was awfully familiar, but I couldn't identify it. I kept stopping and listening, but the source eluded me. Then, after jogging a little farther, I identified the call. A man was out in his yard, talking on a cordless phone, and the call had been his telephone ringing, that new beeping-type tone.—WCO Bill Bower, Troy.

## Tricks of the Trade

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—While Bureau of Information and Education Director Lantz Hoffman was presenting a lesson on public speaking techniques he had just started to talk about visual aids when a red fox appeared at the window. I still haven't learned, however, whether the fox's appearance was coincidental or if Lantz had arranged it.—Trainee William A. Ragosta.

## Just Beginning

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—On my first weekend home from the school I attended a Little League baseball game. When the game was over a group of elderly ladies asked me why I didn't "set the umpire straight" about a controversial call. When I asked why I should have been the one to say something, one woman replied that because I was going to become a "Gaming Officer" that I obviously knew more about the rules than the umpire. Needless to say, I seized the opportunity to explain the agency's real functions.—Trainee Keith A. Falasco.

## Good Advice

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—An old school teacher and friend once told me, "Rick, keep up the dedication to nature and your own goals, for in life, nature is the basis of truth, never lying, giving rewards only to those who deserve." In trying to live by that philosophy I was rewarded with an appointment to the 20th class of trainees. Very few things in life have meant more to me. I challenge everyone who yearns to be a wildlife conservation officer to persevere in your quest and someday your dream will come true, too. Thanks, Mr. Moore.—Trainee Richard Larnerd.



## Unwanted Guest

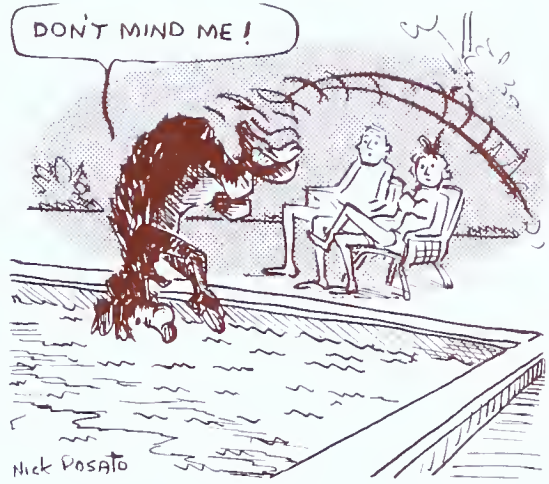
**CAMERON COUNTY**—Last summer Ted Hince and Steve Paul, from the state of Indiana, spent a few days at their camp, Flatlander's Retreat. While hiking by a camp one morning they noticed a broken window. Suspecting a burglary, they reported the incident to me. I immediately contacted the State Police, thinking the culprit may have been an escaped convict suspected to be in the area. On investigation we found that someone had eaten a meal and spent the previous night in the camp and then left via the broken window. A few days later, following a high speed chase, the armed convict was captured by the Ridgway police. He not only confessed to the camp burglary, but also stated he was still inside the camp when Ted and Steve first walked by.—WCO Joe Carlos, Driftwood.

## Worthwhile

**BLAIR COUNTY**—Last June I had the pleasant assignment of assisting with the state Envirothon at Reeds Gap State Park. Over 240 high school students, winners at the county level, competed against one another on their knowledge of the environment. This is such a worthwhile program that I suggest every school district contacts their county conservation office for information on becoming involved.—WCO Don Martin, Williamsburg.

## Hard Stand

**CUMBERLAND COUNTY**—Acid precipitation and rampant development are just two major environmental problems we all should be concerned about. But at the lowest grass roots level is an issue that's the epitome of ignorance and lack of respect—littering. Therefore, anybody found guilty of littering or dumping refuse in this district can expect to pay the highest penalty provided. As far as the officers here are concerned, there's no such thing as a warning for littering.—WCO James R. Binder, Shipensburg.

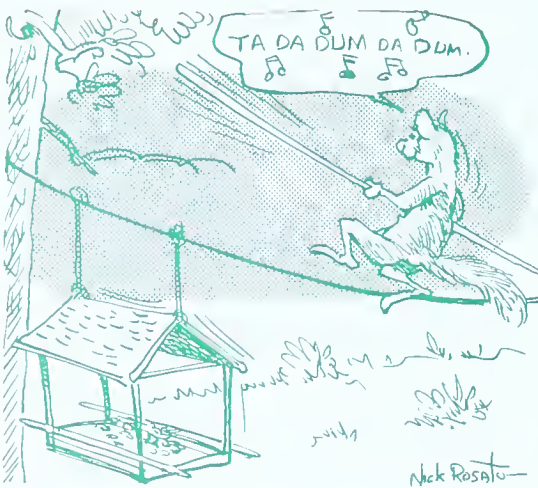


## Just Cooling Off

**SCHUYLKILL COUNTY**—Months ago, when the temperatures seemed to stay in the 90s, Deputy Frank Hoffman received a report of a bear in the borough of Tamaqua. The bear ran down a narrow alley, passed through an open fence gate, and took a flying leap into a private swimming pool. Once refreshed, he returned to the mountain, leaving no disturbances in his wake.—WCO John Denchak, Tamaqua.

## Lots of Action

**SOMERSET COUNTY**—I was on my way home when I noticed a red fox mousing in a field. I quickly mounted my spotting scope on my window and then watched the fox about 300 yards away. It already had several mice in its mouth, and after catching a few more, it loped over to a plowed strip and lay down. Three pups then appeared and started to nurse. Suddenly, the fox jumped up and raced across the field. For a while all I could see was a cloud of dust, but then the fox came running back down the field with a large woodchuck in hot pursuit. When the fox stopped the woodchuck stood in apparent defiance. It was then that I noticed a young chuck in the fox's mouth. After a moment the fox lay back down and ate its meal, and the woodchuck ambled back up the hill to its hole.—WCO Daniel W. Jenkins, Somerset.



### Shocking Solution

**CLEARFIELD COUNTY**—Don Undercoffer, Hawk Run, tried everything to keep a red squirrel out of his bird feeder. Putting the feeder on a pole didn't work, nor did suspending the feeder from a wire strung between two trees—the squirrel just walked along the thin wire, with all the deftness of an expert tightrope walker, and then pulled the feeder up, paw over paw, until the food was within easy reach. Last I heard, Don was shopping for an electric fencer. —WCO Jack Furlong, Ramey.

### Harder Than It Seems

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—One of the first things we were told upon starting our training was that we each had to submit a Field Note every month. I thought, considering all the information we were getting every day, that writing a Field Note a month would be easy. Boy, was I wrong. My mind is still blank. —Trainee David E. Beinhour.

### Pays Off

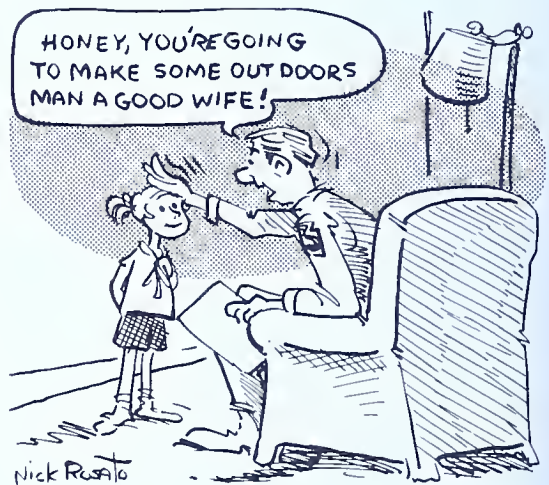
**TRAINING SCHOOL**—The process for selecting this class of trainees began about a year ago and continued until last May. My testing process, however, began back in 1971, when I applied for admittance into the 14th Class. I wasn't chosen then, but I kept trying and was finally selected for this, the 20th Class. How's that for perseverance? —Trainee Richard E. Karper.

### Jack-of-all-Trades

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—During just our first month of training we covered 33 different topics, from law enforcement and typing to field dendrology and communications. By the end of our 37th week we should definitely have a broad and varied background, which is typical of today's wildlife conservation officers. —Trainee Jerry A. Bish.

### Valuable Lesson

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—Being my son's first year of hunting, I was anxious to teach him some of the important points of the sport. On our first—and only—spring gobbler hunt I managed to get us lost for over eight hours. Only by sheer luck did I find our way back to the car. After resting for a short while I turned to him and asked, "Did you learn anything today, Son?" "Sure," he said in a tired voice, "I learned not to go hunting with you until you buy a compass." —Trainee Timothy Conway.



### And in the Right Order

**BERKS COUNTY**—When I sat down to read to my daughter Laina, she chose a book about the seasons. To test her before reading the book I asked her what the seasons were. She replied, "Hunting season, fishing season and swimming season." It's hard to believe, at three years of age she already has her priorities in clear focus. —WCO R. L. Prall, West Lawn.



## On Call

**ALLEGHENY COUNTY**—Butler County Deputy Doug Carney was helping me serve some warrants here. We didn't have a house number for one individual, so we began asking residents of the street where the person lived. As we were going from one house to another, a lady came running up to us. A bird was flying around in her house, scaring her to no end. Doug and I captured the bird—a robin—and immediately released it outside. That's one lady who can't say there's never a game warden around when you need one.—WCO D. E. Hockenberry, Pittsburgh.

## Accidental

**CLINTON COUNTY**—Last spring I learned of two incidents in which bear cubs were swept away in high water. It seems their mothers, which were strong enough to negotiate in the strong currents, didn't realize their cubs were doomed when they followed their leads.—WCO John Wasserman, Renovo.

## Possibly

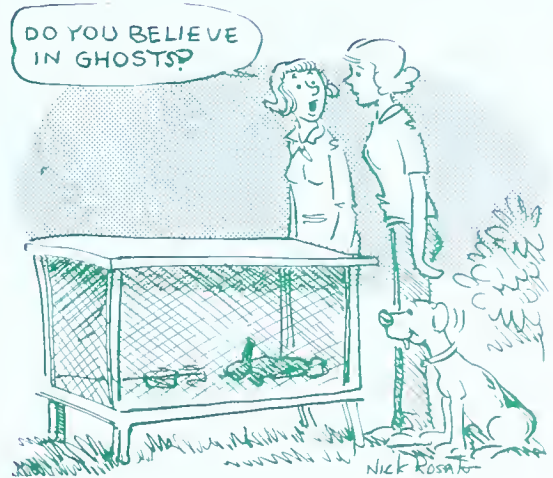
**WARREN COUNTY**—Although the spring turkey season has been over for quite some time, I'm still wondering why so many good hunters didn't get a bird when so many novices did. Perhaps it's true that turkeys are not particularly smart, just too stupid to do the same thing twice.—WCO William D. Shultz.

## Helpful Tip

**CLARION COUNTY**—The bear population has been increasing in this county for the past six years. And while I've tried to encourage more hunters to take advantage of this overabundance, it seems the number of bear hunters we get has declined. If you're looking for a place to go bear hunting, consider this county. Believe me, the bruins are here, and we sure do need some relief.—WCO Gordon J. Couillard, Clarion.

## Out of Place

**VENANGO COUNTY**—May was bear month. At least eight bears took up residence around Franklin, creating a great deal of interest and concern as they roamed about, often within the city, searching for garbage and unprotected beehives. Before the month was over two had to be trapped and moved, and one cub was killed on Route 6.—WCO Leo C. Yahner, Franklin.



## Well, It's Like This

**BRADFORD COUNTY**—There's a story going around about a lady who has a dog and her neighbor who has a pet rabbit. One day the dog's owner came home and found the dog in her yard along with the neighbor's rabbit, but the rabbit was dead. Terribly upset, the lady didn't know what to do. She took it in her house, washed and combed it, and then dried it with a hairdrier. Then she took it to her neighbor's and put it back in its pen, before the neighbor got home from work, fully expecting to tell her about it the next day. Later that evening, however, she noticed her neighbors outside, looking in the rabbit pen. She went over and very casually asked what was wrong. Her friend turned to her, with a very puzzled look on her face, and said they were trying to figure out how the rabbit got back in its cage because they had buried it the day before.—WCO Edward N. Gallew, Wyalusing.

## In the Field

**PHILADELPHIA COUNTY**—This fall many of you will be seeing some new faces—student officers from our training school. An important facet of their training involves working in the field with veteran officers during the hunting seasons. They even live with the officers' families during their assignments. Please, help make these student officers feel welcome as they adjust to their new responsibilities. —WCO Richard J. Shire, Philadelphia.

## Applicable

**FAYETTE COUNTY**—During my long career I've heard many unusual terms, but one of the strangest came recently when an individual reported a "corroding" deer on the road in front of his house. —WCO Stanley W. Norris, Fairchance.



## North for the Summer

**BRADFORD COUNTY**—Athens school teacher Larry Murray was thrilled to see an immature bald eagle near his home on Orange Hill on May 22. The bird was so close that Larry was able to see that the bird was sporting a yellow wing band with a green circle bearing the number 02 in white letters inside. After several phone calls we discovered that the bird was from Florida. It had been banded and marked as a nestling there, and was last seen in the Sunshine State on May 6. —WCO A. Dean Rockwell, Sayre.

## Busy Trapper

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY**—Bob Reid, Lafayette Hill, decided to trap and transfer some squirrels from his backyard. He knew there were too many in the neighborhood, but he was still surprised when, after just two months, he had caught 96. That has to be some kind of record. —William Wasserman, Montgomeryville.

## Big Variety

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—During my first month at the new training school I saw either on or from the school grounds a red fox, a doe and a buck, about a dozen rabbits, a ring-necked pheasant, a Cooper's hawk, a red-tailed hawk, a kestrel, dozens of songbirds, two long-tailed weasels, a woodchuck (12 feet up a tree) and a pair of great egrets. The training school may have been moved from the "Big Woods," but it certainly wasn't moved out of the wild. —Trainee Jim Wilson.

## Reunited

**UNION COUNTY**—After two days of caring for a 15-pound bear cub, which had been picked up by a well-meaning but foolish individual, Deputy George Sampsel found the cub's mom and his two siblings. The little fellow scooted up a tree as soon as George released him, but he raced to mom as soon as he saw her and was immediately accepted back into the family. —WCO B. J. Schmader, Millmont.

## Fine Gesture

**SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY**—The following ad recently appeared in a local paper: "C.J. Arcovitch, District Game Protector, we would like to say thanks for the outstanding job you are doing. The game is more plentiful, and our farms and woods much safer because of your efforts. Thanks from one of the many farmers in the county. I'm sure the game thanks you, too." —WCO Charles J. Arcovitch, Kingsley.



# Where Are The Deer?

**W**HERE ARE all the so-called deer?

That's a question frequently asked by hunters who just refuse to acknowledge there are lots of whitetails in the state. While some of them manage to tag a deer, many still don't believe there are enough. Where are the bucks?

Which of these counties would you pick as the best places to take a buck: York or Centre, Columbia or Clinton, Montour or Potter, Washington or Tioga, even Berks or Lycoming? The first-listed county in each instance is—statistically—a far better place to find antlered whitetails.

One of the measures used by the Game Commission in determining hot-spots is the number of deer harvested per square mile of forested range—the best natural whitetail habitat. It may be difficult to accept, but there are more antlered deer taken per square mile of forest in Berks County than anywhere else in the state. Following Berks are Montour, Washington and Bucks counties.

Last year hunters took 11.3 bucks per square mile of forest in Berks County, 10.8 in Washington, 10.6 in Montour, and 10.0 in Bucks. They're the top counties in the state, in terms of buck harvest densities.

Following those counties are Adams, 9.7 bucks per square mile of forest; Columbia, 9.5; Lehigh and York, 9.1 each; and Greene, 9.0.



**ROGER RICKRODE**, Carlisle, last year took this Cumberland County 12-pointer close to home, near the same spot where two years earlier he shot an 8-pointer. "I hope that's all," said his wife, Mane, when the second trophy appeared on her living room wall.

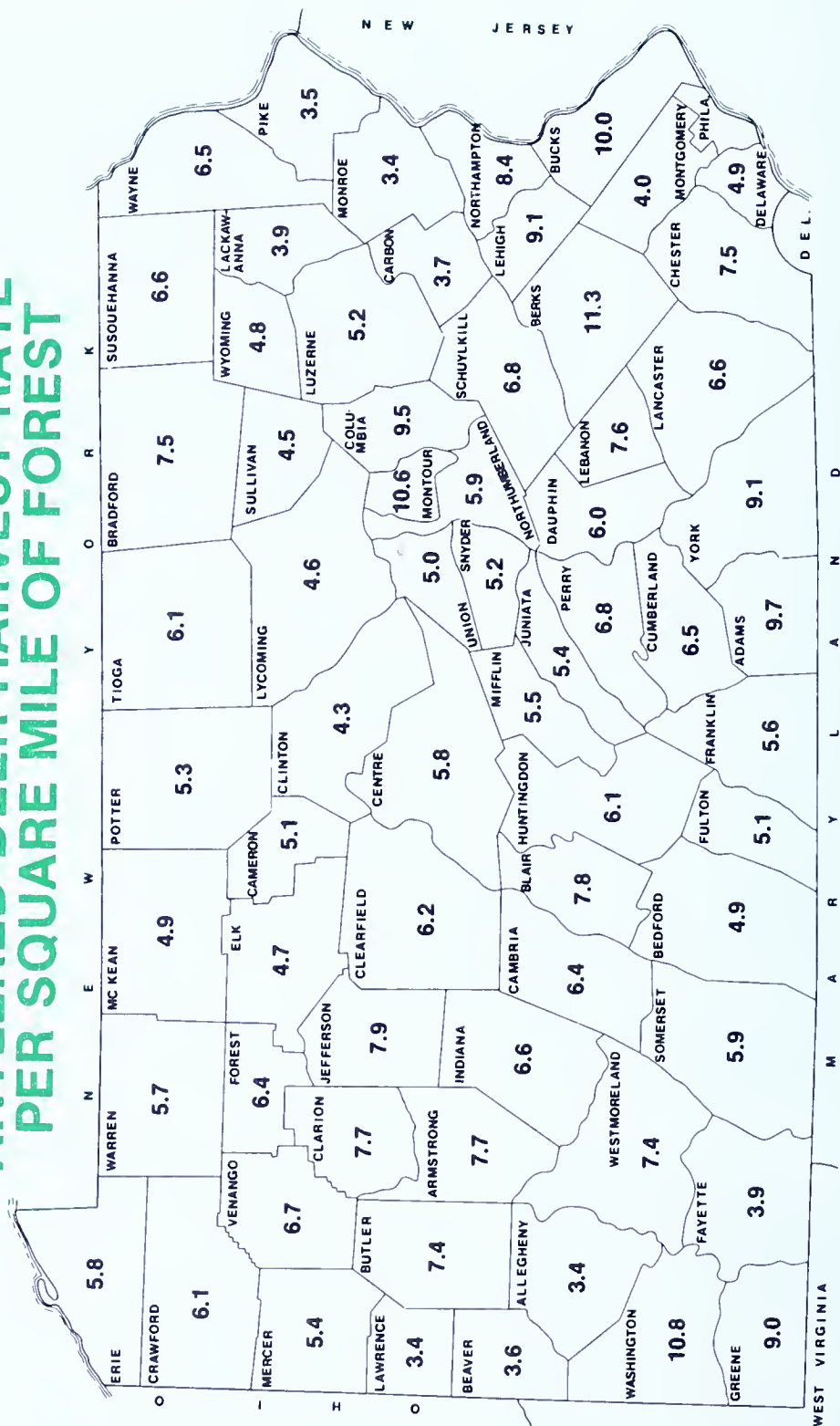
While far more bucks are taken in some counties traditionally thought of as deer areas, those harvest figures can be somewhat misleading because of total land area, total forested area and the number of hunters afield in each county. Clearfield, Centre, Potter, Tioga and Bradford traditionally are thought of as top deer counties, but the sheer size and forest area in those counties, as well as hunter turnout, usually help to account for the high deer harvests there.

Actually, the number of bucks taken per square mile of forest in the big deer counties mentioned is Clearfield, 6.2; Centre, 5.8; Potter, 5.3; Tioga, 6.1; Bradford, 7.5; Clinton, 4.3; and Lycoming, 4.6.

Certainly, hunters drive hundreds of miles to a camp which has been a favorite hunting spot for generations, and that's undoubtedly an important facet of the sport for many. But those dissatisfied with recent buck success; may want to consider changing to an area closer to home, where their chances just may be better.



# ANTLERED DEER HARVEST RATE PER SQUARE MILE OF FOREST



## STATEWIDE RATE: 6.0 ANTLERED DEER PER SQUARE MILE OF FOREST

**TOTAL ANTLERED DEER HARVEST: 157,547**



# Dave Franklin

By Wes Bower

Information-Education Supervisor, Southcentral Region

**I**N HISTORICAL terms the Pennsylvania Game Commission is a relatively new organization, originating back in 1895. Still, in terms of activities and accomplishments, much has occurred in the ensuing 93 years.

Former Fulton County Game Protector Dave Franklin played an important part in many of the agency's achievements and has been around to witness its entire history.

Dave celebrated his 100th birthday on July 25 this year. This centurion's career dates back to 1923 when he was appointed as a refuge keeper. Dave, however, was seven years old when the Game Commission was established, and in the years prior to his appointment as an officer, this enthusiastic sportsman had a keen interest in Commission activities and happenings.

Prior to coming to work for the agency Dave served as a policeman in the Chambersburg and Waynesboro areas. As a policeman in Waynesboro, he was shot and wounded in the hip. Later on, during his Game Commission career, he was shot again, that time in mistake for a turkey.

Dave vividly recalls his Game Commission career. Following his stint as a

refuge keeper, during which he served in the South Mountain and Snow Mountain areas, Dave moved to Upper Strasburg in 1936, when he was placed in charge of the turkey areas as well as several other agency lands.

In 1950 he transferred to Fulton County where he served as a district game protector until his retirement in 1953.

Dave Franklin enjoys talking about his 30 years of Game Commission experiences and remembers when the local deer population was much less than it is today. He is most proud of his work in the turkey area and the role he played in their restoration.

Dave, in spite of his advancing years, is still keen of mind and enjoys visiting with retired and current Game Commission employees.

On a recent visit by retired Game Protector Carl Jarret and Wildlife Conservation Officer Mark Crowder (Dave's two successors in Fulton County), Mark noted that their three careers spanned over 65 years of wildlife conservation officer activity.

Dave Franklin is and always will be an important part of Pennsylvania's hunting heritage.

**DAVE FRANKLIN, center, Carl Jarret, right, and Mark Crowder represent 65 years of wildlife conservation in Fulton County.**



## Chevron's prestigious Civilian Volunteer Conservation Award goes to . . .



**M**RS. HOPE CARPENTER, Mt Bethel, recently received the Civilian Volunteer Conservation Award from the Chevron Corporation as a tribute to her relentless, uncompromising efforts to increase public awareness and understanding of wildlife, particularly birds of prey.

The Conservation Awards Program is the oldest privately supported conservation awards program in the nation. Ed Zern, "Field & Stream" Editor-At-Large, got the program started in 1954, and since then 644 individuals and 95 nonprofit organizations have been recognized for their outstanding environmental achievements. This year's recipients received an engraved plaque, lapel pin, a trip to Washington D.C. (with a guest) and a \$1000 honorarium, sponsored by Chevron. As far as Hope Carpenter is concerned, nobody deserves it more.

Hope Carpenter is most unusual. Her vision has always been directed toward

## One Classy Pennsylvanian

By Ben Johnson

the sky—as a stewardess, who married a Pan Am flight officer; later, as the founder of the Pennsylvania Raptor Rehabilitation Association.

Hope has not always been pro hunting. But her husband, Bill, who is a quiet individual and a hunter, did not pressure her. He patiently demonstrated the many ways hunters and hunting have helped both game and nongame animals.

As her efforts to help raptors and change public perceptions about them got started, Hope soon learned that hunters were strong allies, not antagonists. A prime example: Last year a hunter came to her door with an injured kestrel he had shot in mistake for a dove. Almost tearfully he asked if she could save the bird. A week later he returned to inquire about the bird's welfare. He left her with a \$50 donation for the Association.

The Carpenters' small farm has—by osmosis, it seems—become a haven for injured, sick and orphaned wildlife. Birds and mammals that cannot be released to the wild are retained for educational purposes. Mrs. Candace Hamm, a teacher at Moravian Academy, annually takes her students to Hope's rehabilitation center because, in her words, "It's through Mrs. Carpenter opening her facility to school students that many are able to learn the natural order of things."



**LAMONT CRANSTON**, a turkey vulture named for the old radio character, has free reign of Hope's facility, even though he's blind. Once, he disappeared for ten days, then came walking home through the woods.

An industrious, energetic and supportive group comprises the Raptor Rehabilitation Center Hope formed. Several local veterinarians contribute their time and expertise to the rehabilitation of injured or sick wild animals. As more people recognize this contribution to conservation, the group grows. All their activities are supported by donations, membership dues and fund raising projects, but volunteer labor is the catalyst that has made the association so successful.

As Ralph W. Abele, National Wildlife Region Director and former Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Fish Commission, so enthusiastically stated in his letter of recommendation, "Hope Carpenter has worked across a broad spectrum of conservation sources . . . and has become the most effective and accomplished volunteer this writer has ever known."

### 85 Percent

It appears the educational efforts of the rehabilitation group has had a profound effect on sportsmen. There was a time, not too long ago, when it was felt the only good hawk or owl was a dead hawk or owl, so they were shot on sight. Today, according to the center's 1985 records, only three percent of the admissions are for gunshot wounds. Coincidentally, only about three percent have to be kept for educational purposes; 85 percent of Hope's charges have been treated and released!

Among her many achievements Hope considers her most significant accomplishment to be her training program on the identification of raptors and the protocol for diagnosing and treating sick and injured wildlife. Her 6-hour course has been given to many groups, including our district wildlife conservation officers. Game Commission Executive Director Pete Duncan stated in his let-



ter of recommendation to the Conservation Awards chairman, "In essence, Hope Carpenter has probably done more to educate Pennsylvanians on the need to manage, conserve and protect birds of prey than anyone in the commonwealth, and possibly the nation."

One need spend only a few minutes in conversation with Hope and her dedicated co-workers to recognize that education is the prime reason for their existence. Dave Ehrig, President of the Pennsylvania Outdoor Writers wrote, "For many years this fiery little conservationist has led the fight for public acceptance of the role of raptors in the environment." Dave hit the nail on the head in several ways. Fiery, she surely is; and little, tiny is probably more accurate. Classy, a word used by Peggy Johnson in her letter nominating Hope for the Chevron award is also true. After a day in dirty boots and old jeans, feeding dead chicks and rats to her patients, Hope can blossom forth to attend a formal banquet, looking like a petite fashion plate—a truly classy Pennsylvanian.

# The Invisible Signs

**T**RAFFIC on the highway below me roared and rumbled. I could hear the whine of big trucks pulling the hill and the hiss of air brakes as they went down the other side. Up on the mountain it was just another autumn morning, the sun melting a typical October night's frost, promising a typical October hot afternoon. In the tree stand, I still had one hand pocketed against the chill, the other holding the cold bow handle. Before me the woodland scenery was transmuted by the alchemy of the season to brilliant gold and burnished copper, edged with silvery ice.

The morning was a treasure for the eyes, but not for the ears. The highway sound was intensified in the post-dawn stillness. It made me uncomfortable. The interstate had sliced the Game Lands years ago and since then there'd been few days of quiet. As for me, it wasn't just that the road noises were an assault on the ears; they made hunting

more difficult. I felt only half aware, half alert for the deer I was hoping to tag with an arrow. My hearing was "blind-folded" because the forest sounds had been drowned out. It wasn't until that day by the highway that I realized how much we hunt with our ears.

Most hunters would say that the two faculties they use when getting game are their physical ability and their vision. But ranking right in there is hearing. In fact, our ears can be the most important ingredient to hunting success because they let us know game is present before we get a chance to put our eyes and muscles into play.

## Unfamiliar Ways

One of the intriguing parts of hunting is that it allows us to use familiar senses in unfamiliar ways. In the workday life, driving a car, cooking dinner, typing a manuscript, I use my eyes. But I don't use them in the same discriminating way as when I'm hunting. Then I watch for fine differences in form and color that let me distinguish the gray tail of a squirrel from a beech limb or a deer's back among a tangle of trees.

The same distinction holds for hearing. We don't use our ears every day as we do when we hunt. Daily we block many sounds from our attention, the TV blaring in the next room, the neighbor's lawn mower, the kids arguing. A clutter of noise comes our way that we learn to tune out. But when we're in the woods, we use our hearing to a full extent because, to hunt well, we must truly listen.

Wildlife is adept at staying hidden. Coloring alone enables many species to disappear in their natural habitat. However, animals make sounds, with their voices and movements, that let us know they're around as surely as if we could see them. As hunters, we pick from



**THE TURKEY HUNTER** is bombarded with birdsong. He hears it all, yet distinguishes the faint faraway turkey gobble from the boistrous nearby blue jay.



among the many noises in the forest the ones that game animals cause, the ones that say, "Be alert, get ready, the game you're after is here." Using our ears to hunt is a great advantage over hunting with our eyes alone.

There is no such thing as the "stillness of the forest." In the outdoors every season has its own multitude of sounds. Spring is the loudest and most varied. The May turkey hunter is bombarded with birdsong, from the liquid notes of the veery and the "cheer-up" call of the robin to the "rat-tat-tat" of woodpeckers and rough cawing of crows. He hears it all, identifying, choosing, distinguishing a faint and faraway gobble from the boisterous bluejay in the next tree.

When hunters meet in the woods it's accepted etiquette to speak softly. They talk quietly, not only to avoid spooking game already nearby, but also so they can listen for approaching game. A group of hunters may be earnestly discussing the next deer drive, yet let footsteps in the leaves sound like deer, instead of the pattering of chipmunks they've become accustomed to, and they're all instantly silent. No one needs to say, "Hush, deer!" They all know it. Though they were talking, they were hunting with their ears. This sort of sound interpretation is a woods skill not to be taken lightly.

When I'm on archery stand I try to be a good hunter. A good hunter, I know, scans constantly for game, because it can appear at any time. But I find my eyes get bored. No matter how many times I look, that tree doesn't move. Vision is limiting. It functions best directly in front, peripheral barely counting. Hearing has a much wider spectrum. Sounds come to me from all directions and out of the reachers of my eyes. I often listen for game as much as watch for it. I bet a tremendous number of the deer taken each year are heard, rather than seen, first.

Every animal has its signature sounds that reveal its presence. A walking

# Another View...

by Linda Steiner

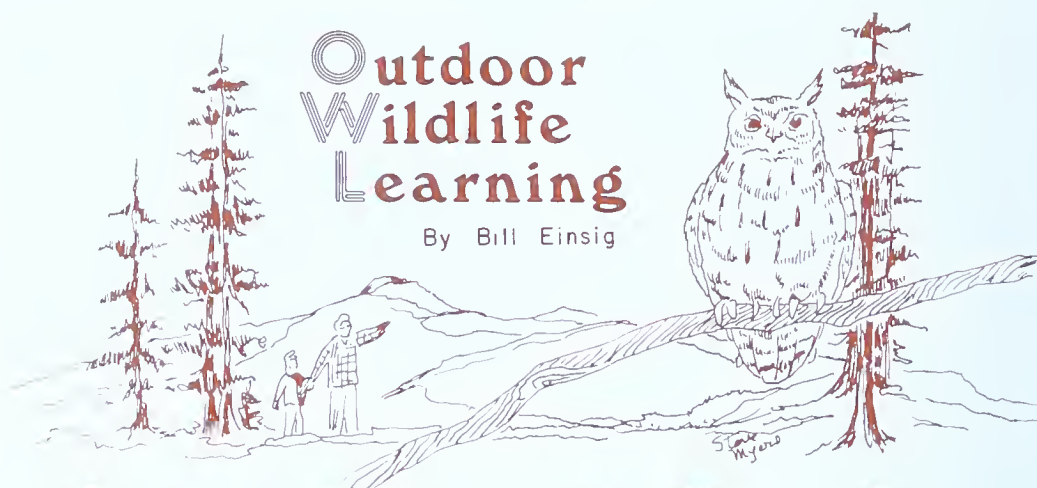
whitetail has a cadence of its own, as does a squirrel jumping through the leaves. Chipmunks are outlandishly loud, their scampering and scolding sounds far out of proportion to their size. Bears, I believe, are among the quietest animals, especially considering their bulk. I've had four bears, a big sow and three cubs, pass by me on paws so soft they barely rustled the dry leaves.

Veteran squirrel hunters are quick to recognize, from amid the other forest noises, the chatter and bark of bushy-tails and their whines of annoyance. They also know the scratch of squirrel nails on tree bark. Turkeys make so many sounds hunters must listen for clucks, yelps, purrs, putts, plus the tom's yodel. Grouse drum and cluck. Deer will "baa" softly. Bucks have grunted, clashed antlers and slashed brush within my hearing, while my eyes went wild trying to locate what my ears said was near. As for a deer's snort, if it's at you, chances are your shooting opportunity is already over.

On my archery stand that frosty morning, on the hill above the highway, I felt cheated of half my hunt. I had a full array of sights to look at, it was true, including several deer that passed out of range. But I was missing the rest, the audio part. There should have been the stealthy, hesitant steps of the deer sneaking by, as well as all the incidental sounds of an awakening woods that add value to a day afield. As much as any other way, we hunt by ear.

# Outdoor Wildlife Learning

By Bill Einsig



## Recommended Reading

**T**HE NATIONAL Science Teacher's Association publishes three outstanding journals for science educators: *Science & Children (S&C)*, *The Science Teacher (TST)*, and *the Journal of College Science Teaching*. Each is targeted to a different teacher audience. *S&C* is designed for elementary teachers who usually teach many subjects in addition to science. *TST* speaks to the secondary science teachers who most often specialize in a particular field of science. The *Journal* provides information and ideas for college instructors who work with students as majors and non-majors in science.

Too often these journals are overlooked or not fully utilized. Each month they offer a variety of information that's difficult to match with any other publication on the market. The editorial staff must make a concerted effort to be certain there is something for everyone in each issue because, month after month, that's exactly what happens! *S&C*, for example, includes articles on physical science, earth science, and life science in almost every issue. They include a sky map and astronomical calendar for the month ahead, and share comments, ideas and lessons from contributing teachers across the country. The other two sibling journals offer the same useful variety at their own levels. It's difficult to understand why one member of this family is not on every teacher's desk.

Some teachers wrongly believe NSTA's publications deal primarily with traditional science—hardcore physical stuff with lots of biochemistry and sub-cellular technical jargon. That's not true. The ecology move-

ment has had its effect in many areas, and all publishers recognize that interest within school programs.

The following is a sampling of useful ideas available each month for the creative teacher at the elementary or secondary level. Only a brief outline is possible here so, if an idea sounds useful, find a library or fellow teacher with that issue. For more information on the NSTA journals, contact NSTA, 1742 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009.

### How Many Deer Live Here? *TST*, March, 1988

In this field study students estimated the number of deer per square kilometer on a Texas ranch. They used a belt transect two meters wide and 500 meters long to count piles of deer pellets. Dividing this number by the area of the transect (.001 square kilometer) gave them the number of pellet groups per square kilometer.

Next they divided pellet groups per square kilometer by the average defecation rate of 13 per day and that result by the number of days in the study period. Their final population density estimate was 0.2 deer per square kilometer on this particular ranch.

A similar study could be conducted in most rural parts of Pennsylvania where significant whitetail populations exist. The defecation rate of 13 is valid for Pennsylvania, although it varies with a deer's diet, age, and the season of the year.

In this activity, as well as in most similar "studies," it's important to remember that students are neither trained biologists nor



statisticians. While they should obviously try to be as careful and as accurate as they can, they will certainly be unaware of many subtle variables that professionals would automatically control. In fact, the teacher is likely to be as unaware as the students.

The value of such an activity is in the doing—not in the results. If a student leaves the lesson with some new knowledge, some new understanding of investigative technique, and some positive feeling for the field of science, then the lesson was extremely valuable.

## **Quail in your Classroom, TST, March, 1988**

According to the author of this article, the ideal classroom animal is the *Coturnix* quail. It provides a steady supply of fertile eggs when cocks are caged with hens and is easy to hatch and maintain. *Coturnix* eggs hatch in just 16 or so days compared to 21 for chickens and 23 for bobwhite.

Our own native bobwhite quail are good choices for Pennsylvania classrooms. A single female can lay up to 80 eggs per year, enough to supply several classes of students with their own egg-hatching experiments. Like the *coturnix*, the bobwhite requires only small cage space and basic gamebird or turkey feed. With simple care and feeding, bobwhites can live for years as classroom animals.

## **Learning about Lichens, S&C, March, 1982**

Lichens are slow growing plants composed of an alga and a fungus. That association, where one partner requires the other, makes it an unusual teaching tool. Add to it the widespread presence of lichens on park trees, rotting logs, sidewalks, rocks, and building foundations and it becomes a useful classroom specimen.

This brief article gives enough background information on lichens to whet your appetite and enough teachable ideas to put to work right away. Start a lichen terrarium. Look at thin sections with a microscope. Survey the campus to find where lichens grow and where they do not. What conditions make some of these micro-habitats better for lichen growth than others?

## **Up the Creek, S&C, May, 1988**

The main focus of this article is the Virginia Marine Science Museum in Virginia Beach, Virginia. It clearly describes the impressive site and programs VMSM offers to school and adult audiences.

Also included is a description of an active game, "Life on the Fringe," that gets whole classes of students acting roles as critters in a salt marsh. Fiddler crabs answer questions about the salt marsh in order to avoid being eaten by clapper rails and raccoons. The crabs cross the marsh at low tide and must avoid the hungry predators. Complete game rules and a list of sample questions are included in this article so teachers can use the game with little preparation.

## **Outdoors in Winter, S&C, January, 1982**

Looking for new ideas to use outdoors this winter? This article highlights 20 activities elementary kids can use to learn about the natural world after the snows fall. Each idea is just that—an idea. That's enough, however, to get a creative teacher started on new outdoor adventures that are both fun and educational.

## **Take a Hike! S&C, April, 1982**

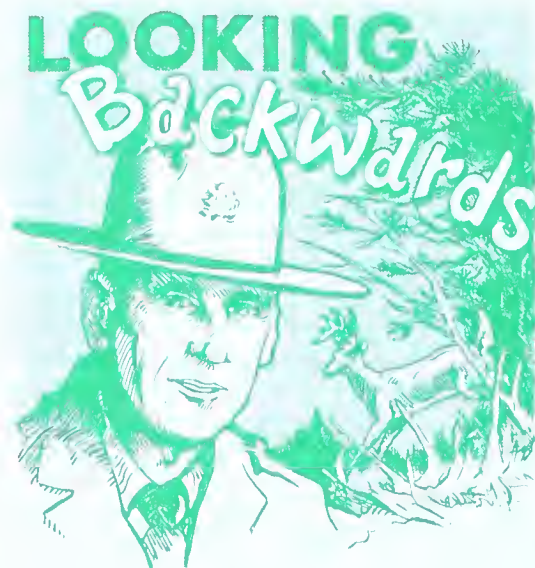
This brief article suggests 23 hikes around the school grounds for primary and preschool youngsters. It's important for children of those ages to learn to use all their senses to make observations and to describe what those senses tell them. These hikes help students do that.

The Scent Trail is a series of strong-smelling (food flavorings: onion, anise, lemon) markers the teacher secretly arranges along some path. Students then smell their way from one point to the next.

The Alphabet Hike asks kids to look for objects outside to represent the ABCs, while Follow the Ant requires students to follow an ant for five minutes and then draw a map of its path.

All good ideas for getting outside.

NSTA journals offer a wealth of ideas, teaching tips and tidbits of current science, making them the best resource for teachers with a special interest in science. Check them out!



**By Bill Bower**

Wildlife Conservation Officer  
Bradford County

SOMEWHERE in my travels I picked up an old Game Commission poster. It has a drawing of a beaver trapper walking away from one of his sets. Hiding behind a tree is another man, holding one of the trapper's traps and waiting for him to leave to steal another one. The poster, by Jacob Abbott Bates, (which is probably a collector's item), states in bold letters: "*Stealing Traps Is Dastardly!*"

Every Game Protector has to deal with stolen traps. I would like to tell you about two incidents that stand out in my mind.

The first incident began as most do, with a telephone call. It was a Saturday before the first day of buck season. The caller said he was having a problem. Somebody was stealing his fur and traps. I arranged to meet the trapper on his trap line later in the afternoon. We looked for clues as to who was stealing his traps but found none. He told me that he had seen someone running away when he pulled up to check his traps earlier, but that he didn't think anything of it until he discovered some of his traps were missing. The trapper, an older gentleman, was trapping for muskrats in a meandering stream that ran through the pasture fields of a local farmer. He wasn't sure if the person he saw running had anything to do with the trap theft or not. He also told me that he thought someone had been removing rats from his traps.

As I said, he was an older person, a gentle type of guy. He wasn't as upset about losing furs and traps as most trappers I know would be. He struck me as the kind of guy who reaches the highest plateau of sportsmanship. He was trapping for pure enjoyment, exercise, and a chance to be outdoors. He said if somebody needed some traps, all they would need to do was ask. He would lend them some.

I'm afraid I wasn't too much help. I said, "This looks like the work of kids. Chances are they won't be back; but if they do, the only way we're going to catch them is to stake out your traps and see who comes along. Since we don't know what time the traps were taken, we might have a long wait."

I told him I couldn't spend a lot of time sitting on his traps, but that I would come back around dusk and sit for a few hours. Through the years I've found from experience that the best time to patrol for illegal activity of any type is right around dusk. No matter whether it's illegal deer shooting, illegal trapping, or sitting on illegal game, I always have high hopes—or that "special feeling"—that dusk is when the violator will return.

I should have said most of the time because that time no one came to the trap line. When I got home I called the trapper to tell him I had had no luck. He said he might watch his traps the next day, which was Sunday. I was bogged down with paper work. (The Game Commission requires a load of paper work at the beginning of each month, and nothing will get an officer in hot water quicker than being late with a report.) They also always seem to start hunting seasons at the same time. I've often suspected that they do this just to see how we officers work under pressure.

Anyway, I told him to let me know how he made out. Well, Sunday afternoon, the phone rang.

"Hello, Game Commission."

"I've lost some more traps. When I drove up to check my traps today I scared two guys out of the creek bed. They took off on foot across the pasture, carrying some of my traps. I'm too old for a foot race. I yelled, but they kept on running. I've pulled my traps. I've lost too many now. I'll move to a new location."

"Well, I'll keep my eyes open. If I come across any traps with your name on them I'll let you know."



The trapper and I both knew the chances of recovering his traps were slim. That's why we urge trappers to engrave their names on the bottoms of the traps, so they can be identified later if they are stolen.

Well, the deer season opened the next day. The lost traps and the trapper were all but forgotten by me (I'm sure not by him). All the investigations, arrests, interviews, and complaints a game protector handles during the deer season all seem to run together by the time it ends.

It does end, though, just about as quickly as it comes. Christmas came, and my family and I celebrated as most people do.

It was after Christmas that the old trapper called me again. "Mr. Bower," he said, "if you get time I'd like you to stop in to see me." ("Mr. Bower"? When anyone calls me that I look around to see if my Dad's around.)

"Okay, but just call me Bill. I'll drop by tomorrow, if that's okay."

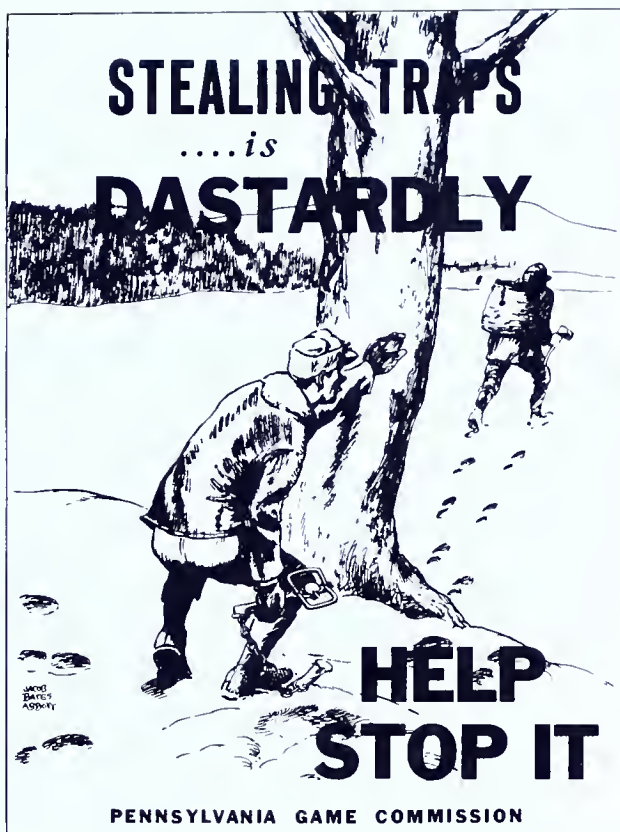
The next day I stopped to see the old trapper. He handed me an envelope.

"Here, read this," he said. "I got it in the mail."

It was a thank you card with a picture of a big frog on the front. It said, "Hi there! I'm the Greeting Frog! I have been sent to bring you greetings on this occasion!" Opening the card, I read, "Greet it! Greet it! Greet it!" It also had a hand written note which went as follows: "Thank you for the traps you gave to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ for Christmas. They really enjoyed them. One's set to catch a rabbit, another was set to catch a big rat on our porch. Ha! Ha!" The note was signed by the mother, using the two boys' names.

You know how mothers are about "thank you" notes.

"Well, I'll be darned," I said. I went to see the two young boys. They weren't aware Mom had sent the thank you note, so they were quite surprised when I knocked on the door. It seems the two boys, who were only 10 and 11 years old, started to bring some rats home to skin out. They told Mom the old trapper had given them the rats for helping him on his trap line. Then, before Christmas, they gave their Mom a Christmas package to put under the tree. They said it was a Christmas gift from the old trapper. Like all kids on Christmas Day, they came running down the steps to open their gifts.



They finally got around to opening the package that was allegedly from the old trapper. The mother said they were really excited when they found out they now had their own traps. Mom thought it was really nice that someone would take the time to help her kids and then give them a Christmas present, so she did what every mom would do; she sat down and wrote a thank you note.

Well, I had to break the news to Mom. She was upset. She wanted to know what would happen, if the kids would be arrested, and how much the fine would be.

"Well," I said, "I'm not sure. The boys are pretty young, but what they did was not right. Give me the traps and I'll take them back to the old trapper."

I knew before talking to the old trapper what he would want done. As I said, he struck me as the gentle type. "Let the boys go. I got my traps back. I lost only a little fur. No one's been hurt. Maybe I could find some old traps around here I could give them to get them started."

"No, I don't think you should do that. The boys did wrong. Giving them some traps would be like rewarding them. We'll just leave the punishment to the mother. She'll do what's right."

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## GAME NEWS

For a Friend . . .

I went back and gave the two boys a stern lecture. Mom assured me she would take care of the punishment. I can't recall everything I said to those two boys, but one thing I did remember was that old poster. I told them, "Stealing traps is dastardly!"

The second incident started while I was on jacklight patrol, a strange place for a trapping violation to start. It was early in the evening on a Saturday night before buck season. I was patrolling Armenia Mountain. I had been in the area the day before, checking on some shooting, and had been driving along the edge of Rundall Creek. I saw tire prints where someone had pulled off to the side of the road. I stopped to check why someone would be pulling off the road at that spot. I found a trap set in Rundall Creek where it goes under the road. As it was trapping season and the trap had been set legally and was properly tagged, I got back in the car and drove off, not thinking too much of the incident.

Well, to get back to Saturday night. As I said, I was working the area for jacklighters. I had a deputy with me and two others were working from another vehicle. The night was pretty much uneventful, a few spotters, but no shooting. We had one pickup truck that kept coming back through the area. After about the third trip I decided to check them. We waited until we saw their light on a deer, pulled out from our hiding place, drove quickly up behind them, turned on the red light, and pulled them over.

"State Officer! Any guns or game?" I said.

"No sir. None here."

"Well then, are you seeing any big bucks?"

"Saw a few nice ones."

I shined my flashlight around inside the cab. It had two occupants. They said they were from down state. They had come up for the deer season and were staying at a camp down on the river road. Then I shined my light inside the back of the

pickup. There was quite a bit of stuff, including a pile of traps.

"Doing some trapping?", I asked.

"Yeah," the driver said. "I thought I would set some before deer season."

I started to talk to him about trapping. His answers were vague, and I quickly got that old feeling that things were not right. Most of the traps did not have metal tags attached, but one did. I read the name. It was one of the traps I had checked the day before on Rundall Creek.

"Where did you get your traps?"

"I brought some from home and borrowed a few from a friend."

"How about this trap here? Is this your friend's?"

"Yeah, that looks like one of his."

That old feeling got stronger, so I said, "Wait a minute." I went back to my vehicle and radioed the region office.

"515 to Dallas."

"This is Dallas, go ahead, 515."

"Would you 10-21 (call by phone) this guy?" I gave the name and added, "I don't know the number, you'll have to get it from the operator."

"It's almost midnight, 515. Do you want me to call now? He might be upset."

"10-4. I don't think he'll mind."

Finally, Dallas came back on the air. "I have your party on the line. He's upset because it's late."

"Well, that's okay. Just ask him if he loaned any of his traps to this guy."

"Dallas to 515. Nope, he doesn't even know him. He wants to know what it's all about."

"515 to Dallas. Ask him if he's had any traps stolen."

"Dallas to 515. Nope, not that he knows of."

"515 to Dallas. Well, tell him I think his trap he had set on Rundall Creek was stolen. I have the trap and man in custody. Tell him to go back to bed. I'll call him in the morning."

Back at the pickup I asked the driver to get out of the vehicle and come back to mine. Once inside I told him what I knew. He confessed to having stolen the trap only about one hour earlier. I wrote him a citation for stealing a trap. I thought the other traps might also be stolen, but he assured me they were not. I went back to his cabin, though, and talked to the owner. I was satisfied the other traps were legal so I left. But before I did I got the man aside and told him, "Stealing Traps is Dastardly!"



# Thornapples



Chuck Fergus

HE JUMPED from the water calling *kohee, kohee, hohee*, an urgent, high-pitched sound. My shotgun tracked him, the plane of its barrels overtook him, and when the right barrel crashed he tumbled down.

He was a wood duck drake with a plumage of blue and purple and green, gold on his sides, a dark crested head. I sent Jenny, and she jumped in and began swimming, her head swiveling from side to side as her nose sought the scent. She reached the beaver lodge in the middle of the pond and climbed onto it.

When the drake saw her he dived. He swam underwater for a ways and then came back up. Ripples cracked the surface, reflecting the blue-and-yellow sky. He had a broken wing and, I would learn later, he was shot through the body as well, and I have no clear conception of what he might have thought or felt. Maybe the air dimmed for him, or maybe it was as though he could not shake the water from his eyes; maybe he felt insulted or angry that his wings, which had never failed him before, would not now carry him off.

She caught him against the dam. He was her very first duck, and she turned and swam back with him, breath coming hard and wet, around the duck and above the water, sucking in, blowing out. Her eyes locked on mine. She came into the shallows, her feet found purchase, and she walked out and laid him in my hand.

She shook herself, covering my glasses with spray. The duck waited placidly. I wound his neck, felt the tensioning and the sudden hitch: dying, he quivered in my hands. Jenny panted and wagged, and I petted her as shots crumped at the far end of the marsh. I made myself take in the spectacle of the wood duck drake, because if I don't stop and stare, don't turn them in my hands and see the light shifting in colors across their feathers, the dangling wings, the bills and feet and eyes — then I am hunting not birds, but only ideas.

We hunted together many days last fall, Jenny and I. It was her first year. We had our share of empty game pouches, of willful dog work and spoiled or over-anxious or otherwise botched shots, but these have faded from my ken. And, I must admit, I have also let slip some of the pleasant memories: hard-driving flushes, sounds of water and wind, sensations of snow and rain, the sight of gamebirds in flight; for the mind cannot hold all. Yet I have kept vivid memories, many of them crystallized around the grain that is a successful wingshot: the intent focusing on a fleeing, then tumbling, bird, followed by the consummating retrieve.

In late October, Carl and I visited the Pufferbelly. In fact we named the cover



that day, when a coal-burning locomotive, white steam and black smoke, came clanking past our hunt. It reminded me of a detail out of an old shooting print, except that the train was proceeding backward, the engine running in reverse, pushing instead of pulling the four green cars. The cars were innocent of passengers: no derby hats silhouetted in windows, no blue-uniformed conductors, no ladies wearing long white gloves. It was all too easy to explain: an excursion rail company periodically exercises its antique train on the seldom-used valley line.

The flight woodcock were in, and they were plenty, so that hunting beneath the disintegrating tatters of smoke, and tasting the fruity putridity of the coal, it was as if we had stepped back in time to a simpler, more abundant era. We hunted the flats between the tracks and the creek, through breast-high frost-burned goldenrod, beneath aspens that still held a few twinkling gold leaves. Carl killed his third woodcock, which gave him his limit; he unloaded his shotgun and followed Jenny and me.

A spaniel's back legs are muscular,

slightly longer than her front, so that she springs off of them, taking big leaps and making sudden turns and bounds. Her tail lashes, and her ears flap like the frayed ends of a scarf.

She was quartering nicely, working within scattergun range. I gave two toots on my whistle and sent her into a patch of gray dogwood; tooted twice again and brought her back across to a patch of aspens on my right. Here she slowed, tail whipping faster. She veered and drove in on the scent.

The woodcock went up in front of her nose. In the split second before I mounted the gun I could see from the size of the bird that it was a hen. A crossing shot, right to left. It was as if the shotgun were a pointer, and when it tapped the woodcock—like a small russet picture hanging on a wall—the bird went down. Jenny was on it in a trice. She hitched it up in her mouth, turned, trotted back, and laid it in my hand.

Two hunters, two limits, a dog. The woodcock had mud on its bill. On the little bands of black and brown across its crown, water droplets glistened like jewels.

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Later in the season Carl invited me to his home in Lebanon County, where we hunted the weedfields bordering an old quarry. The farms all around were sterile in their extreme productivity, a panoply of contoured tan and green bands, corn fields that looked vacuumed clean, picked soybeans, trimmed alfalfa, winter wheat, scarcely a fencerow in sight; the farmsteads were castle islands in a sea of fields, with tall silo keeps.

We were hunting pheasants. We flushed two hens out of a fallow strip near a great spreading oak whose bole was veined with Virginia creeper. A moment later, Carl's Labrador retriever flushed a cockbird that went out long-tailed and cackling; Carl cut him down.

### Refining the Range

Jenny and I hunted a patch of foxtail below a brushy hillock. She got onto something, swung out to catch the scent, right, left, refining the range of her sweeps, zeroing in. The world constricted to a patch of golden grass and a brown-and-white spaniel hard on the hunt, and then the cock came clattering out, red and green and bronze, no crowing, very businesslike in his attempt to get away. I swung through the long tail, through the body and through the beating wings, to the white neck ring where I slapped the trigger. He fell dead. She found him in the brush on the hillock and proudly brought him back.

Another day, at home in late November, I rose before dawn; snow beat against the pane, and the thermometer stood at 16. On the black-water creek, wind keening and decoys bobbing, I squinted and shivered and thought about bed and finally concluded that sleeping and hunting are both elemental pleasures, but that a morning in bed is like any other morning in bed, while a morning on the creek is like no other morning on the creek, or anywhere else, and therefore can be possessed, and kept, especially in the shot remembered.

Ducks kept going over, black silhouettes against the purple sky. The day came on, and they turned gray and then

silver-sided in the strengthening light. Flights of four and three and six and twelve, circling, flaring, coming back, cupping wings, dropping in, webbed feet spread and reaching. I missed a shot on a black duck. I failed to shoot at a pair of passing woodies when my hands wouldn't function in the cold. I



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## **GAME NEWS**

**For a Friend . . .**

missed a single black. My partner killed a black duck and a woodie, packed up his spread, and left.

My teeth were chattering. Jenny sat on the bank, whining and shivering. A kingfisher flew past, making me wave the gun. Then four blacks came in, no preliminaries, dropping for the decoys. I swung on the leader and shot. He pumped his wings and rose, I swung faster and shot again, he picked up speed and flew away—and as my spirits sank, I heard a splash.

A duck lay in the creek, on its back, feet slowly treading. A maroon stain spread in the green water. I called “Jenny!” and she eased into the icy water, swam out, grabbed the duck, made a neat pirouette. The current carried her downstream; I went along the bank to meet her.

The duck was dead, hit in the head and neck; it must have been in line behind the one I missed. A black duck, with a beautiful violet speculum that glistened as I spread its wings, a greenish bill, a tan back intricately mottled with brown. Its underwings were a startlingly bright off-white. I hung it in the crotch of a tree, and by the time I had bagged the decoys there was an icicle an inch long hanging from its tail.

Late that afternoon we went out again. The temperature had risen all of two degrees. Four inches of new snow lay on the hills. I left the 12-bore at

home and took the 20 to a slope thick with saplings, grapevines, and briars. Jenny seemed not the least bit tired by the morning’s labors. She drove into the grape tangles. She jumped fallen logs, wormed through the briars. Working back toward me, I saw her take scent. She slammed to a stop, wheeled, and sprang. The grouse came whacking out through the canes. Right to left against a lemon sky: I shot, the bird’s wings folded against its sides, and it completed the arc of its flush, going down.

She brought it back, a hen. I took the bird, stowed it in my pouch, reloaded.

Going on, we came to a grape tangle. I sent Jenny in, but before getting there she pivoted on a fresh track. I had just turned myself, peering through the thick saplings, when the bird went out. I saw it the moment it lifted; then it was screened by trunks; and when it flashed across an opening, I shot.

A big cock grouse with an angry eye; she carried him gently, her jaws across his back. Above the quarry’s eye, vividly I saw Jenny’s: intent on my eyes, as mine must have been on hers, two minds joined by an invisible tether. The tether shortened. I knelt, our gazes parted, and I took the grouse and swiftly broke his neck. The tremors played out in my hands. I spread the wings and the black-tipped chestnut fan, dangled his head and let Jenny sniff it. I wanted to stop and hold the moment. I wanted to hold her, hug her, tell her what a good dog she was.

She wouldn’t have it. She wormed out of my grasp, trotted off a few yards, and looked back. She wanted to hunt. She did not share my need to hoard memories. For her, there was only the sweet now.

### **Pennsylvania Alliance for Environmental Education Conference**

“Community: Coming Together to Share” is the theme for this year’s PAEE conference, being held November 11 to 13 at Wilson College in Chambersburg. The theme is designed for educators, naturalists, resource managers, students—all those concerned about a healthy natural environment. For more information contact Melodie Stewart, 12466 Mentzer Gap Road, Waynesboro, PA 17268.





**HUNTING IN a group offers many advantages and side benefits for archers, but each member must operate as part of a team. Group hunting can be most productive during the mid-day hours when whitetails are normally bedded down.**

**Suggestions on . . .**

## *Together*ness

**By Keith C. Schuyler**

**I**N THE years of the Great Depression prior to WW II, deer hunters gathered in groups for a retreat to some remote cabin and a chance at some shooting. Venison, a secondary but important adjunct to the hunt, was divided equally. The meat was a treat that helped justify the cost of ammunition and groceries for a week in the woods.

Then Pennsylvania's deer population expanded to the point that more individuals could go it alone and bring home an entire deer. It became increasingly difficult to get a group together for a hunt. The privacy of solo hunting seemed to replace the comradeship of cooperative hunts.

True, because of the sharing, it was possible for a hunter to collect more

than an entire deer without firing a shot, if he hunted with groups often enough. On the other hand, a successful hunter might be entitled to but a few pounds of venison if he hunted very little. To circumvent such a discrepancy, 14 of us gathered for a one-day hunt one year after the war agreed to a stipulation that a successful hunter would share his deer with three others to be drawn by lot. Five bucks were missed that day; my 100-pound 7-pointer was the only kill.

You should have heard the wailing from a couple hunters who "didn't understand" why they were not entitled to  $\frac{1}{14}$ th of the roughly 60 pounds of bone and meat. I never tried that one again.

As bow hunting grew in popularity





**STANDERS** and drivers should travel as quietly together as each would alone. Note the effectiveness of camouflage on these four bowmen.

after the war, particularly after archery seasons were initiated, 1951, hunting in groups was revived in some areas. The pleasure and camaraderie of such hunting came with it. Archery equipment in general was only a few grades above primitive, and ability of the average archer left much to be desired. By combining forces, we improved shooting opportunities. Youngsters and newcomers to the sport had a much better chance to learn and be part of the action. Besides, it was fun.

### Solo Hunting

Those of us who wanted to do some solo hunting could often take a stand early and late. Our group hunting was usually between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. From a practical standpoint, such hunts were on Saturdays, when participants were free from school or work. We missed a lot of deer and killed a few. Importantly, we all learned much about the animals and our own limitations. The traditional system of dividing an animal was no longer a problem. It belonged to the successful hunter, who quite frequently had to get the deer to a processing center or a walk-in cooler because October weather is often quite warm. Anyway, those who didn't score had an additional opportunity in the gunning season, the antlerless deer season, and then the late season.

Today, it is again difficult to get a group of archers together for a deer

hunt. Good equipment, more knowledgeable hunters, and, of course, an expanded deer herd provide more incentive than ever for a hunter to simply take a lone stand or try to stalk an animal. Many of the good driving areas have been sliced up by new owners who all too often plaster their acquisitions with trespass notices.

Yet there remains the same fun and sport in group hunting, even though open land shrinks each year. Public lands alone provide ample opportunities statewide for those who enjoy the group approach. Experience has proven that the average score per hunter in a group is considerably better than for those who go it alone. Even so, that same experience has shown that when poorly organized, group hunting can be little short of disaster.

The most important consideration for all participants to realize is that from the moment they step afield they are hunting for one of the wariest animals in the world. The late Fred Bear (who died last April 27) hunted big game animals with a bow across much of the globe. He rated the white-tailed deer as tops. Just





**HAVING HELP** dragging out a trophy like this can be real convenient, even during the late season when cool weather and snow cover makes the chore relatively easy.

because they are frequently seen along our highways doesn't demean them in any way. Rather, the fact that they continue to proliferate, despite highway hazards and spreading suburbs, is clue enough to their ability to survive.

No deer drive should start until the standers get themselves stationed at desirable spots. Any talking or other unnatural noises will alert every deer within hearing distance to avoid that spot when forced to move. Each stand should provide open shooting in as many directions as possible, but right before a drive begins is the wrong time to break dead limbs to clear shooting room. Make do with what you have, just make sure you can draw your bow without interference from limbs or branches. Don't stand on an obvious runway; a frontal shot is one of the poorest possible for an archer—even if the animal doesn't see you draw. It is better to let a closely approaching deer pass before any personal movement. Give the animal time to present a much more favorable quartering rear shot.

### Bump Deer

Drivers should consider themselves under the same noise constraints as the standers. "Driving" is the accepted term, but you really want to just bump the deer, not scare them. On a proper drive, depending somewhat on air movement, there is an almost equal chance of the drivers getting shooting. All that is necessary is for them to move the deer from their beds. Deer are accustomed to being disturbed. If not alarmed by undue noise, they may meander off to the side to let you pass or trip softly around you. In so doing, a deer might expose itself to another driver or mosey on through to the standers.

Scare it, and you can probably forget it. Once alarmed, the animal will reassess every human scent and sound and, likely cut out the side of the drive



or race through the standers. Neither situation is desirable.

In my opinion, drives should be slow and conducted in areas small enough that they can be properly covered by the number of participants. In leafy October, one stander can't normally cover much more than 20 yards to either side, at times less, depending upon the type of cover. Both the drive and the stand, when possible, should resemble curves to minimize the tendency of deer to slip out the sides.

### Later in the Year

Later in the year much more territory can be covered. After being hunted the animals are more apt to run. But they will still attempt to sneak away in heavy evergreen cover or thick brush—where they are more likely to be found in December and January. Seasonal snow will soften your approach, but even greater caution is necessary with the recently educated animals.



**LATER** in the season, after the vegetation thins, hunters—either in groups or alone—can effectively cover larger areas, even in brushy stands like this.

ing alone should not be forgotten. Failure to do so will negate some of the advantages that hunting together provides.

If a hit is made and the animal doesn't drop within sight, there is the added advantage of numbers. But they can turn into a disadvantage if some discipline is not maintained. The spot can be well marked for later attention. Or a drive can be set up to cover the direction the animal might have taken. On at least two occasions I've seen the original deer found and a second one shot during the recovery attempts.

Safety is always a consideration, and some feel that an occasional low whistle by the drivers is advisable to warn standers of their approach. It can help maintain the line for any not completely familiar with the territory.

In the event of a mishap or sudden illness of any member of the party, there is safety in numbers. Help is available to drag or carry an animal carcass. So, whether it is a one-day hunt or a week in a cabin or a tent, you have a chance for experiences that multiply when they are shared.

And your own chance to score is improved.

None of those suggestions are great secrets, but collectively they set a general pattern that should be followed for any consistency in success. Fun and jokes must be reserved for times and places where no immediate hunting is planned.

When a succession of drives is set up, as across a long wooded flat or a mountainside, silence must be maintained, even at the end of each drive. Otherwise, it is best to go to new territory. Also, when hunting in a group, the stealth and care employed when hunt-

## **GAMEcooking Tips**

Here's an easy recipe for pheasant that can be used for grouse, dove or quail as well. It's a perfect example of how just a few simple ingredients and some time can transform game into a really special meal.

### **Spiced Pheasant Breasts**

- 3-4 pheasant breasts, split
- 6 tablespoons soy sauce
- 4 cloves garlic, minced fine
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/4 cup lemon juice

Place breasts in a sealable plastic bag or baking dish. Combine remaining ingredients in a blender. Pour over pheasant and refrigerate 3-4 hours. Remove from refrigerator and allow to stand 1-2 hours before baking. Bake in marinade, flesh-side down, covered, at 300 degrees for 1-1½ hours depending on the size of the birds. Serves 2-3

—FROM WILD GAME COOKERY  
BY CAROL VANCE WARY





A GENERATION ago little thought was given to such things as shot strings, and few scattergunners ever patterned their loads. Most implicitly believed in high brass and large shot.

# Thoughts On The Shot Charge

By Don Lewis

Photos by Helen Lewis

**T**HAT'S TOO high for your 20," the older hunter stated. "Use my 12-gauge; it shoots harder."

The "too high" target was a gray squirrel perched in the top crown limbs of a massive oak. The young hunter was reluctant to shoot the larger shell, so the squirrel was dropped by the veteran hunter.

"That's the price you pay for using the 20-gauge," the older hunter said, sliding the squirrel in his game pocket.

Although that was a hypothetical instance, I have actually witnessed similar scenes several times.

A village hunting "expert" constantly berated my "little 20" as a peashooter. At 16, I didn't know enough about shotguns to defend my 20-gauge Stevens double. On one hunt, he humiliated me in front of several experienced hunters when he stopped me from taking a shot at a rabbit sneaking through some huckleberry bushes about 35 yards away. He killed it with his battered 12-gauge single barrel, claiming the 20 wasn't enough gun for that distance and that he didn't want me to cripple the rabbit. When he offered me the cottontail I dropped it on his boots and left.



**SHOT STRING** length is least significant on straight-away shots, above. It generally applies on extreme crossing shots, those at right angles to the hunter.

I don't want to suggest that the hunter was unsportsmanlike or jealous of my new 20-gauge double — it cost \$19.95. It was just that his shooting knowledge was based more on myths and false information than on ballistic facts. During the Great Depression, hunters in my area hunted for meat. They associated shotshell power with killing ability. The larger the shotshell, the more powerful it had to be. Little was known about muzzle velocities, chamber pressures or pattern density. The old country store, where I listened to the village experts, stocked high velocity shells filled with big shot. Fours and 5's were the most popular shot sizes, and they had to be stuffed in either Climax Heavies or Peter's High Velocity cases. They cost about seven cents each, but they were the favorites of several local experts who were willing to pay for the extra power. I could tell who had been hunting an area when I saw the red hulls of the Climax Heavies or dark blue Peter's empties.

I have wondered many times what would have happened if those proponents of large shot had properly patterned their shotguns with both large

and small shot. They believed implicitly that high brass and large shot constituted killing power, and they gave little or no thought to such things as pattern density and shot strings. I'm certain the gaslight era hunter knew a little about patterns. Literally every hunter wanted a full choke barrel to squeeze the shot charge as tight as possible so it would hold its pattern over a longer distance. Open chokes allowed the shot charge to open up, cutting down on killing distance. Shot strings were seldom discussed.

### Shot Strings

At that time there wasn't much published data on shot strings. In fact, today's shooter is somewhat perplexed over the length of his shot column, especially at long ranges. Some shotshell ammunition makers stress the importance of the length of the shot string, while in the hunting fraternity, it's a controversial subject.

The term "shot string" is self-explanatory. It's the stringing out of the shot charge after leaving the muzzle. Naturally, all the shot doesn't leave the muz-



zle at the same time. Also, all the pellets in the shot charge do not fly at the same velocity. Shot deformation significantly reduces individual shot pellet velocities. It's commonly believed that shot are deformed only in the choke area. That's not quite true. There is some deformation due to choke constriction, but other pellets are deformed—flattened might be a better word—in the forcing cone and also on the trip through the bore before the choke. The more concentric or round a pellet remains, the more velocity it will retain and the straighter it will fly. Steel shot usually patterns better than lead shot because it remains spherical. There's almost no deformation with steel shot.

The length of the shot string is directly related to the choke. Contrary to popular opinion, shot strings are shorter from full choke barrels. At 40 yards a shot string from an improved cylinder barrel would be over a foot longer than the same shot charge fired in a full choke barrel. There are so many factors involved in this that it's impossible to give exact shot string lengths at various distances. Some shotshell manufacturers suggest their products have shorter shot strings, but the hunter has no way of proving it.

There are two schools of thought about whether it's better to have a long shot string or a short one. Those who favor the long string claim it helps make up for slight miscalculations in lead. The short string proponents are just as adamant that more pellets hit the target from a short shot string. As a gun writer, I'm caught in the middle, but I am not too sure the length of the shot string is all that important.

From various shot string tests I have read about, it's safe to say that a shot string at 40 yards will be roughly 13 feet



**A LONG, full choke barrel, once considered the ultimate for all small game hunting is, perhaps, really most appropriate for turkey hunting.**

long. There's a catch here. A shot string is made up of fast pellets and slow ones. You might say it's a two-part affair. Not all the pellets in a 13-foot shot string are evenly spaced. The bulk of pellets are in the forward part of the string, possibly in the first 9 feet, and the deformed flyers bring up the rear. They represent the tail of the string, and they seldom play a major part in the kill.

That last statement will bring a rebuttal from the long shot string fans. They claim the rear pellets are the ones that make up for the errors in lead, and I have no doubts that works now and then. If I were choosing sides, however, I would throw my weight behind the short shot string believers.

Getting more pellets on the target instantaneously is bound to reduce the chances of crippling. While the long shot string fan might occasionally benefit from the rear of the shot string, the short string buff will either make a clean kill or miss completely. I'm sure it's not all that simple, but I think you see what I'm driving at.

The basic reason I'm not overly concerned about the length of the shot string stems from the fact that it generally applies to extreme crossing shots, those at right angles to the hunter. Any lessening of the angle lessens the im-



## Pennsylvania Game COOKBOOK



**Pennsylvania Game Cookbook** is a 96-page collection of delicious recipes submitted by **GAME NEWS** readers. It includes methods of preparing all kinds of game available in Pennsylvania, plus some recipes for moose, elk, and other species. \$4.00 delivered from **GAME NEWS** office.

portance of the length of the shot string. When a bird is flying at a right angle to the gun, it must cross the full width of the shot charge. If a duck is flying at a high speed, say 70 feet per second (almost 50 miles per hour) even if the pattern is ideally placed, only the forward part of a long shot string will connect on a crossing shot. The remainder of the string will pass behind the target. If the duck is flying at a 20-degree angle to the shooter, more of the back part of the shot string will connect. The smaller the angle, the more time the target is in the width of the shot pattern. Consequently, more of the rear part of the shot string will connect.

When we pattern a shotgun on paper all we see are holes in a flat surface. We

tend to think the pattern formed instantly. If we could watch the forming of a pattern in super slow motion, however, we would see that it starts with only a few pellets striking the paper. The following pellets make it both wider and denser. To the human eye, seeing a pattern form is literally impossible. The shot charge appears to arrive all at once, but a pattern builds continually from the first pellet through to the last one. Also, the patterning target is firmly tacked to a backing board. It can't move. Therefore, the pattern will form eventually, no matter how long it takes the deformed stragglers to arrive. That's not the case with an angling rooster or high-flying goose. Some of the pellets in the forward part of the shot string may strike home, but the laggards will pass behind the speeding target. If the experts are right in their claim that it takes at least seven hits to guarantee a clean kill, the shot string must then be short enough to make that possible.

A duck traveling 50 miles per hour, crossing in front of the hunter, will travel nearly 14 inches from the time the first few pellets of a long shot string hit the bird until the last stragglers arrive. Small as it may seem, those few inches could allow a bird to escape most of the main shot string. On the other hand, a short string will get more pellets in the bird while it is covering the 14-inch distance.

So what does all this mean for the average small game hunter. As I said before, shot string length can be argued both ways, but from a practical hunting standpoint, you and I should not lie awake at night worrying about this ballistic phenomenon.

One thing we should take into consideration is the makeup of the shot charge. Many of yesteryear's small game hunters put the emphasis on shot size. As shotgun patterning was not in vogue with most small game hunters, few were aware of the relationship between shot size and pattern density. The prime purpose of a dense pattern is to keep a moving target from slipping through untouched. Almost every hunter knows



**SUCCESS** in the cornfields, grouse coverts, and briar patches comes with being familiar with patterns and knowing where they strike in relation to the aiming point.

that the degree of choke in the muzzle has a direct bearing on the diameter of the pattern.

It's just as important to keep in mind that the number of pellets in a shot charge has a direct bearing on the density of the pattern. A shot charge containing 1⅞-ounces of No. 4 shot has approximately 152 pellets. Using 1⅞-ounces of No. 6 shot increases the pellet count to 253. That's 101 (66 percent) more pellets inside the same pattern diameter. It doesn't require a ballistic expert to know which shot charge will produce the denser pattern. It's also easy to see which pattern would put more pellets into the target, and that's what makes the kill so long as penetration is adequate.

A myth that has led many hunters astray is the belief that large gauges make wider patterns than the smaller gauges. For all practical purposes, pattern diameters remain relatively equal from all gauges when fired from barrels of the same length and choke constriction. There will be little difference in pattern diameters between a 12-gauge and 20-gauge under these conditions.

That ballistic fact is a prime reason I am a strong advocate for the 20-gauge. I appreciate its light weight and low recoil. True, the 12-gauge can have a larger shot charge, but I can offset that in the 20 by using smaller shot. At nor-



mal shooting distances on most small game, 7½s and 8s offer adequate killing power. I know that for a fact; I have been using both shot sizes for 30 years with good success.

All the ballistic equations and formulas can be confusing. Most have little to offer the average hunter. To be successful in the cornfields, grouse coverts and briar patches, the hunter doesn't need full choke barrels and magnum-type shotshells. He does need to know how his shotgun patterns and where it patterns in relation to where he is aiming. Open chokes and small shot will bring more success in the fields and woods than all the ballistic mumbo jumbo that many so-called experts claim goes hand in hand with good field shooting.

### Trappers, Give Us a Call

TRAPPERS, we would like your cooperation. If you should happen to accidentally trap a bobcat, please, contact the nearest Game Commission region office. If possible, somebody will be sent to tag, measure and help release it. We are currently keeping track of a few bobcats wearing radio transmitters, but additional information on bobcat numbers and distribution, particularly in the northcentral region, would be valuable. The state's bobcat population appears to be increasing, but we still have much to learn about this rare feline. With your support, we may someday soon see bobcats back in their rightful place among Pennsylvania's fauna.

# *In the wind*

bob mitchell



Efforts to help Connecticut's piping plover recovery efforts are being jeopardized by housecats. Not one chick survived from the two nests known to exist in 1987, and of the 35 least tern nests in the same colony—the two species nest together—only two chicks escaped the feline predators. This year pet owners were encouraged to keep their cats inside, especially at night during the May through July nesting season.

Since 1971, as part of a restoration project, 1100 wild turkeys have been released in North Carolina. As a result, the state's turkey population has gone from about 2000 in 1970, and 8000 in 1980, to 15,000 today, and spring harvests have grown from 351 in 1983 to 680 in 1987 and 1027 last spring.

About 25 members of Greenwings, an affiliate of Ducks Unlimited for youngsters interested in conservation, helped the Wyoming Game and Fish Department band over 200 Canada geese. Greenwings also have built wood duck nest boxes and goose nesting structures for use in the state.

A special squad comprised of 29 federal and 25 state wildlife law enforcement officers issued over 1100 citations last year for various waterfowl hunting violations. As reported in *Gun Week*, the officers were assigned to waterfowl hunting hotspots, particularly wintering areas. Most of the violations were for hunting over bait or exceeding bag limits. In one instance three hunters were apprehended with 168 ducks, and in another case, one individual was found with 53 birds.

The barn owl is considered endangered in seven Midwestern states, largely because modern agricultural practices have destroyed the grasslands and meadows the owls need for finding their primary prey, small mammals, particularly voles. As reported in *National Wildlife*, voles can represent up to 70 percent of a barn owl's diet, and that just during the breeding season, a pair with six young will consume approximately 1000 small mammals. It's routine in some countries for farmers to build and erect special barn owl boxes to attract the predators to their fields. In an effort to learn more about them, over 500 captive-reared barn owls were released in a study area in east-central Missouri between 1979 and 1986. By 1985, however, researchers knew of only three barn owl nesting sites in the study area, and of only 17 nesting pairs in the entire state.

The U.S. Forest Service and the Canadian Forestry Service have embarked on a cooperative study of sugar maples in North America. Concern over declining sugar maples has grown over the years, and many owners blame acid precipitation. Scientists have already begun monitoring the conditions of trees in both commercial and natural stands, and they will continue to do so through 1990.

Since 1984, when the North Dakota Wildlife Federation instituted their RAP—Report All Poachers—program, over 160 prosecutions, amounting to over \$27,000 in fines, have resulted, and over \$10,000 in rewards have been paid. Under a new law that took effect this year, the state Game and Fish Department received authorization in turn over confiscated equipment to the federation to help support RAP. Over 250 bidders attended the first auction, which included the sale of 35 firearms, spotlights, traps, and fishing rods. Over \$8900 was derived from the auction and another \$1030 was made from the sale of RAP caps at the door.

A hunter from Washington was hunting in Idaho last fall when he found an elk carcass with an identifying ear tag still attached. As reported by the Boone and Crockett Club, a check by state officials revealed that the elk was 22 years old, one of the oldest on record.





## **Voluntary Waterfowl Stamp No. 6**

Pennsylvania's 1988 waterfowl management stamp, a pair of wood ducks, created by Cedar Falls, Iowa, artist John Heidersbach, is the sixth "duck" stamp offered by the Game Commission. Funds derived from stamp sales are used for wetland acquisition, habitat development, and waterfowl-related education. Stamps cost \$5.50 each, \$22 for a plate block of four, and \$55 for a full sheet of ten, delivered. For additional savings, the cost for five or more ten-stamp sheets, in any combination of years, is \$40 per sheet. The 1986 stamps will be available through December 31, 1988, at which time all remaining supplies will be destroyed.

Stamps are available at the Game Commission's Harrisburg headquarters, region offices, the Pymatuning and Middle Creek Wildlife Management areas, and at participating hunting license issuing agents and stamp dealers. Signed and numbered fine art prints of this design are available from art dealers and galleries nationwide.



*The Wingless Crow*, by Chuck Fergus, is a collection of thirty-three Thornapples columns which have appeared in **GAME NEWS**. The nearly 200 pages of entertaining reading will appeal to Fergus fans as they reread these selected essays as well as to those who've yet to discover the joys of Thornapples. This top quality hardcover books costs \$10, delivered, and can be ordered from the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept AR, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.



# PENNSYLVANIA GAME NEWS

DECEMBER 1988

VOLUME 140



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**COVER PAINTING BY KEN LAAGER**

(Cover Story on Page 54)

PENNSYLVANIA GAME NEWS (ISSN 0031-451X) is published monthly for \$9.00 per year, \$25.50 for three years, or membership in Pennsylvania's Cooperative Farm-Game Project or Safety Zone Project; to Canada and all other foreign countries, \$10.00 U.S. currency, per year. Published by the Pennsylvania Game Commission, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, Pa. 17110-9797. Phone (717) 787-4250. Second-class postage paid at Harrisburg, Pa. CHANGE OF ADDRESS: POSTMASTER: Send both old and new addresses to Pennsylvania Game Commission. Allow six weeks for processing. Material accepted is subject to our requirements for editing and revising. Author payment covers all rights and title to accepted material, including manuscripts, photographs, drawings and illustrations. No information contained in this magazine may be used for advertising or commercial purposes. Copyright © 1988 by the Pennsylvania Game Commission. All rights reserved.

*NOTICE: Subscriptions received and processed by the last day of each month will begin with the second month following.*

DEAR FOLKS,

Another deer season is almost here, causing us to reflect back on past experiences involving this most memorable time of year. This letter is specifically addressed to the deer hunters who each year use my property. I own 160 acres of prime deer habitat, and have had it enrolled in the Game Commission's Farm-Game Program since I bought it 28 years ago.

I am also an avid deer hunter, as is my wife and our family. Our property is located one mile off a public road and is serviced by a private lane. We have a cabin on the property which we use during the deer season and many other times of the year. With 28 years experience, we have a good background for the following comments concerning the hunters who annually come here.

There was a time when we left our gate open so you folks could drive to the cabin to park. After some of you began driving 4-wheel-drive vehicles on our fields, however, the gate—as you've found over the past several seasons—remains closed and locked. It's difficult to remember the last time any of you asked permission to hunt or showed any appreciation for the privilege. All of those things, however, along with the needed repairs to the lane at the close of each season, I have endured and really don't mind too much. But I'd like answers to some questions I have concerning last year's deer season.

Only my wife and I planned to hunt last year. Other family members either had to work or were too discouraged from past experiences. We stayed in the cabin the night before and planned to hunt from a couple of stands we had picked out. About 6 o'clock, when it was still dark, I saw two flashlights come up the lane. I went out and asked the two hunters where they were planning to hunt so we wouldn't end up on the same stands. They informed me of two other hunters ahead of them.

When I arrived at my stand around 6:30, somebody was already there, so I moved around the hill. About 45 minutes later a man and two youngsters appeared, obviously planning to stand where I was. After considerable discussion among themselves, they went up the hill. A few moments later I looked around and there stood one of the boys, not 50 yards away, and with his rifle pointed right at me.

I moved off in disgust and ended up at the cabin. My wife was there. She had returned because somebody had taken her stand, which is clearly within the 150-yard Safety Zone around the cabin.

Some of you I know by name, but I won't embarrass you by using them here—you know who I'm referring to. I also consider you to be upright, useful citizens; therefore, it bothers me to witness your disrespect for the sport, laws and me.

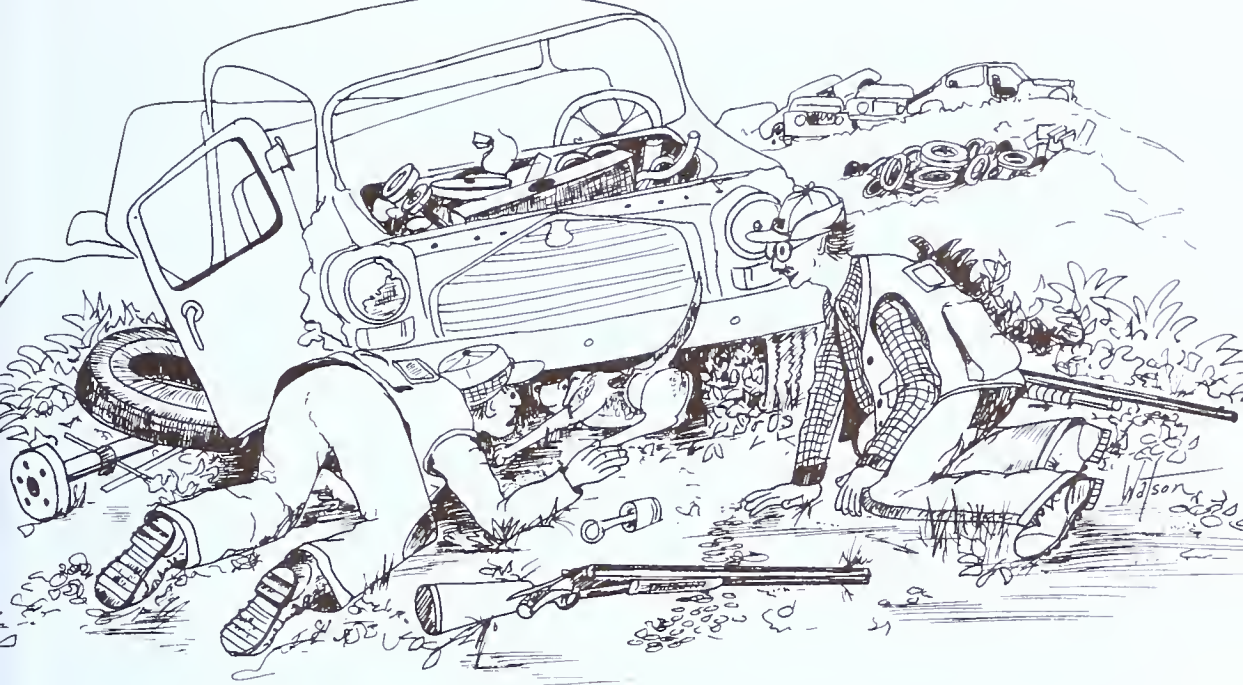
To the fellows from Virginia—why were you so anxious to get on stands you knew from past years were always occupied by family that you went in before 6 o'clock? And, passing within ten yards of our cabin, why didn't you stop and ask for permission? Did you watch from a stand and shoot at a deer in a Safety Zone out of ignorance of the laws, or just disregard for anybody but yourself? By the way, big game hunters are now required to wear 250 square inches of fluorescent orange; just a hat is no longer sufficient.

To the big fellow who returns every year—last year you came in around 7:15 with two boys. Why did you knowingly post one of them within 50 yards of me? And why did you do the same thing to my wife later in the day?

Let me remind you fellows who have been hunting on our property for years that you have not earned a right to hunt without permission. The attitude some of you have that you're entitled to hunt on my place just because you've been coming here for years is disturbing to me and a mistake on your part.

*(continued on page 42)*





**YOU SEE, Aunt Mildred's is a museum. Around the "farm" is a most complete collection of rusting cars, trucks, relic farm machinery and a variety of miscellaneous antiques. It's an unusual place to hunt bunnies.**

# Hunting at Aunt Mildred's

**By Dave Fisher**

**T**HE CALL was inevitable. It always came around the second week of November and this year was no exception.

"Hey Fish, How you doin'? Been doin' any huntin'?"

Always the same questions—Always the same answers. In fact, I could make a tape and we could each play it every November.

"Okay. Yeah. I've shot a few bunnies." Standard answer, but Joe knows I've been out every day and shot more than a few bunnies by now.

"Hey, why don't we go up to Aunt Mildred's Saturday?"

"Sounds good to me. About 8:30?"

Aunt Mildred's is a crazy place to hunt cottontails and a special place for my buddy Joe and me. We get there only once or twice a year, but each visit is a unique experience.

Aunt Mildred owns the farm. It's situated high in the mountains of Fayette County. It's not your average farm. Fact

is, I'm not sure what they grow there, sometimes I think it's machinery. They do have a few dairy cows, however.

You see, Aunt Mildred's is a museum. Around the "farm" is a most complete collection of rusting cars, trucks, relic farm machinery, hay wagons, tractors, bulldozers, junk, garbage, old furnaces, giant sawmill blades, boats, rolls of barb wire, sheets of tin, collapsed buildings, old foundations, stacks of lumber, logs, and a variety of miscellaneous antiques. That's not all. The farm is also in the process of being stripmined and the remainder is being cut for logs. It's an unusual place to hunt bunnies, as you have to hunt around drag lines, tri-axles, trailers, oil barrels, machine parts, and an assortment of sediment ponds.

In all of this stuff (mostly decades old and crumbling away) live an enormous supply of cottontails and their bigger cousin, the mountain woods rabbit, which Joe and I affectionately call "great northerns."

To give you an idea of what it's like to hunt in such a place, I'll try to describe an actual hunt there. Although it may be hard for you to believe, I swear on my Schrade Old Timer it's all true.

First, it's a good idea to have a 4-wheel drive vehicle if you want to get around Aunt Mildred's. That's because tractors, tankers and coal trucks do quite a job on the farm access roads. We also like to get far away from the hordes of dogs and cats that hang around the main house and barn.

### Waste No Time

Once out of the truck, our dogs waste no time sniffing out a rabbit. Joe, as usual, runs downhill to cut off the rabbit's normal escape route, and I head uphill for a cluster of holes under a small grove of cherry trees. The first rabbit is a smart one; he runs toward a small pond and through a flock of ducks where Joe cannot shoot. No matter; I kick up another just seconds later. It runs straight downhill, around some miscellaneous machinery, and jumps a small creek. Joe throws 2¼ ounces of lead at him and calls the dogs. The bunny takes refuge under an unknown structure that surely stood upright at one time.

Joe's now screaming at the dogs, "Get him! Get him!" I break out a sandwich — this might take awhile.



Joe spends 20 minutes jumping up and down and tearing at the collapsed building. The dogs haven't been seen for ten minutes. I decide to get ready. Yes, here he comes up out of the basement with two dogs in hot pursuit. When he's clear of the dogs I let fly a load of 7½s. The charge immediately clangs an old oil drum like a pair of cymbals. The rabbit sneaks out from under the drum and takes refuge in a huge barberry bush.

"He's in the bush, Joe. Get him."

As Joe approaches the rabbit rockets out of the bush and is followed by an angry swarm of lead. We finally take our first bunny.

We now work into a small apple grove complete with several vintage pickups and sedans, an assortment of abandoned farm machinery and more unknowns. I check out several likely looking hiding places, look in the ends of a stack of pipe, and peer in the back seat of one of the cars (cottontails like the soft seats).

I hear a dog yip a couple times, a shotgun blast, and look up just in time to see a great northern tumble out from under a hay wagon.

"Hey, good shot!" You can't give Joe too much praise or you'll never here the end of it. Actually, it was a great shot.

As Joe's cleaning his northern, I watch the dogs squeeze under some long steel beams and the rusting hulk of a 60-foot mobile home frame.

"Uh, Joe, I see a bunny under there."

Joe scoops up his gun (he hates to be left out of the action). Too late, the bunny exits in a big hurry and rolls at the sound of my 1100.

"Hey, good shot" Hey, good shot? Is that all? The guy never gives me any praise.

The next one's a classic. With the help of three sniffing noses, we trail another sly cottontail over 16 acres of old abandoned farm machinery and other scat-

**WITH THE help of three sniffing noses we trail another sly cottontail over 16 acres of old abandoned farm machinery and other scattered relics.**



tered relics. The before-now-unseen bunny finally squirts out from some undefinable pile of steel and rust and quickly disappears under a nearby brush pile.

"Here! — Here! — Here he goes!"

The dogs go crazy, run around like idiots, and pay no attention to where I'm pointing. By the time they get their act together, Little Houdini has already slipped into the next pile, then into a third.

I'm screaming, "Here he goes! Here he goes!" But the dogs now look at me like I'm the idiot. No problem; I'll kick him out myself.

"Uh, Joe, he's in this pile right here. Cut off his escape uphill so he doesn't run that way."

He does anyway, right over Joe's feet and through more machines and equipment. Joe pulls down on the furry little beast.

"Uh, Joe, watch that coal truck! That's a good one." Joe lowers his Remington as the rabbit scampers under a Caterpillar (the metal kind) and over a discarded set of tracks (the metal kind).

It's hard enough to get the dogs on a fresh bunny track, but how do you get them to track over tracks (the metal kind!)? Now Joe's screaming, "Here he goes! Here he goes!" And hurts his foot kicking the tracks (the metal kind).

The dogs climb all over the dozer and miraculously pick up the tracks (not the metal kind) and tear off toward another clump of brush piles. Joe scrambles after them. We have pursued the rabbit for an hour now and over and around 66 obstacles. I give up.

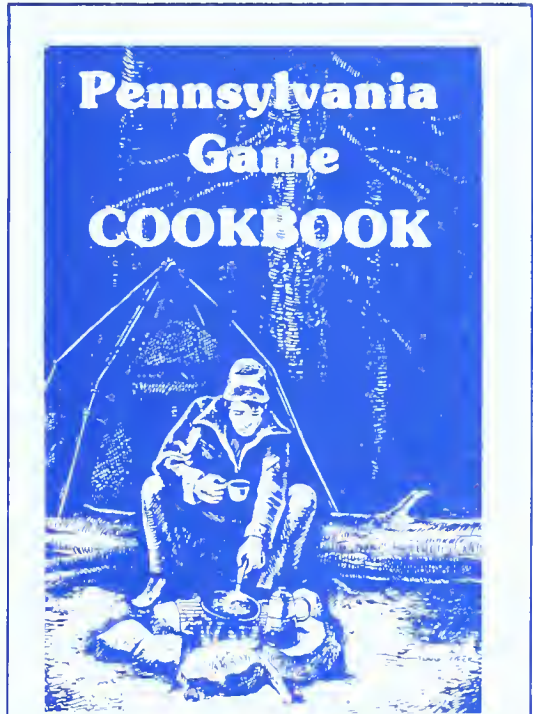
Joe's now patrolling around the stacks of brush, kicking the piles, and once again screaming, "Get him! — Get him! Here he goes!" This is going to take awhile; time for another sandwich.

I'm just licking the mayonnaise from my fingers when the dogs start yapping with renewed fervor under one particular pile. Joe's been kicking and stomping on it like a maniac for 20 minutes. I get ready. Too late! Joe's 1100 barks and I see him scoop up the tenacious bunny. Good shot. But I don't dare tell him.

Joe steps back onto the rut of a road that splits the farm in two and takes the appropriate bows.

"Are you done fooling around? Can we get back to huntin'?" The guy's such a big ham.

We check out the edge of the strip-mine and run a couple of rabbits around under some fallen trees. We shoot a few shells but fail to claim any bunnies from the tangle. I'm quick to point out that the light's bad on this section of the farm, it's tough shooting through all these tree tops, and that these particular rabbits are a new and speedier variety. Joe agrees with me for once and we drag the dogs out of the slashings. About three seconds later, we're both bogged down in ankle deep ooze trying



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to cross the strips. The three dogs are snickering because they can gleefully walk over the slimy muck. After hunting with us, our dogs have learned to snicker a lot. Joe suggests we get out of the mud. I'll tell you, the guy's brilliant.

We stagger toward the truck. Each of our legs is encased in 20 pounds of clay. Just about the time we shake most of the mud loose, we step into a pile of cow manure. The dogs again start to snicker. By the time we reach the other side of the pasture, where the truck's parked, each dog has had his turn rolling in the strained grass and corn. Joe says something about smelling something. I told you, the guy's brilliant.

After a short rest (only for the dogs' benefit, of course) we drop off the rabbits at the truck and descend on our last hunting spot.

The next section of the farm is unusual for Aunt Mildred's because it actually contains some real cottontail habitat, plus the normal discarded vehicles, machinery, and a huge garbage dump.

This time I take the easier downhill path. Joe leads the dogs into a small but dense thicket below a cornfield. The dogs are still behind Joe when his 1100 comes on in rapid fire. I see small saplings, weeds and leaves flying out in the thicket but don't bother to swing my scattergun. I mean Joe can't hit the Goodyear blimp on Sunday afternoon,

but he rarely misses a bunny three times. I'm wrong, as usual, and a great northern leaps the tractor path in front of me. I slip the gun from my shoulder and throw a few ounces of lead at the target, but am distracted by Joe's ranting and screaming at the dogs. "Get him! Get him! Here he goes! Here he goes!"

I figure this is going to take awhile and reach for a sandwich. A few pats around my hunting vest and I discover a near emergency—I'm out of food. Now this is really serious!

Knowing Joe won't leave Aunt Mildred's without our limit of rabbits, I'm wondering if I'll have enough strength to make it back to the pickup, when I'm distracted again by the dogs approaching. Oh, they're actually running a rabbit.

Joe and I look at each other very seriously and spread out along the tractor path. We both know if we don't take this rabbit, there will be no living with the dogs for the next two weeks.

Yeah, here he comes, afterburners blazing. Joe and I both open up on him about the same time and the next thing I know Joe's saying, "Hey, good shot!"

"Huh, No—No, that's yours, number 4, time to eat."

"No way, that was clearly some fine shooting."

Sure it was—I nervously pat my coat and vest again, not even a smashed candy bar.

"Okay, dogs, lets check out this powerline, dogs, good dogs," Joe cheerfully calls out.

Nothing in my pants pockets.

We enter the powerline right-of-way and two rabbits blast out from a pile of brambles. Mine gets away cleanly, but I hear Joe's gun blast. Oh, boy, he's taken his fourth!

Here dogs, here dogs, here, here, here!"

The dogs short circle the rabbit in

**JOE AND I look at each other very seriously. We both know if we don't take this rabbit there will be no living with the dogs for the next two weeks.**





some kind of record time and it comes hopping right to me. I'm forced to shoot it.

While I'm cleaning the bunny I notice the truck is just a speck on the horizon. I mention something to Joe about cooking one of the rabbits and then come up with a good idea. Maybe he'll run out of shells.

"Hey, let's go check out the dump and those antique cars over there." This serves two purposes. First, it gets Joe turned toward the truck, and second, we always do a lot of shooting in there. I hide the rest of my shells in my gamebag then casually ask, "Gee, you think we have enough shells? I have only the three that're in my gun?"

"Shoot, I always bring lots of shells to Aunt Mildred's." Swinging his coat open reveals a vest loaded with rows of brass heads that looks like something Pancho Villa's men would wear. Yeah, great idea.

"I'm going to stay up here on the outside, you go ahead in there." I don't think I have enough strength to carry another rabbit.

Joe happily leads the dogs into the pile of trash and quickly opens up with the 1100. I'm not very optimistic. We've been in there before. The rabbits are a new species of "trash bunny" and offer only flashes and glimpses of themselves.

I find a nice stump to sit on and listen to the action. I start to hallucinate about T-bones and french fries. I even think I see the dogs chasing a Big Mac.

No, it's a rabbit! Before I can think, I instinctively pull up and shoot the Big Mac, I mean the rabbit. Oh, no, I've taken my fourth. Joe will never leave now.

Joe comes strolling over and gives me a dirty look. "Your fourth, huh? Boy, ran him around in there for awhile, never thought he'd leave the trash."

"Say, Joe, are we out of here yet? We've taken seven bunnies. Here take one of mine."

"Naa, couldn't do that. Besides, we haven't even been in that group of Plymouth coupes over there yet."

By the time I clean my last rabbit and empty my gun, Joe has entered the

next exhibit of "Old Autos Americana." I stagger over as Joe steps on a massive chrome bumper and walks nonchalantly along side a '44 Chevy (or maybe it was a '39 Cadillac). The dogs have been squealing and yipping under the car for 10 minutes while I recheck my hunting clothes for some unfound morsel. I figured this was going to take awhile when a brown ball of fur, in an awful big hurry, exits a hole in the lid of the trunk.

What happened next appeared to be played out in slow motion. Joe, facing the hood, hasn't noticed the brown speedster exit the trunk. He slowly pivots around at my yelling and screaming.

### A Complete Miss

The gun slowly comes to his shoulder as the rabbit clears the bumper and hits the ground. Bam! A complete miss. The bunny, now in full stride, is on a dead run for the trash pile. Bam! The cottontail stumbles, definitely hit. I cheer, and he instantly regains his footing. Panic starts to set in. From my vantage point I can see that the rabbit will be out of range in just a few more strides. Visions of burgers and shakes are quickly being destroyed by each leap.

Bam! The rabbit, hit in midair, tumbles and spins, suspended snail-like in an instant of time, then hits the ground like a rag doll.

Joe lifts his gun and hat to recognize the imaginary crowds, and then gracefully retrieves his trophy. The guy's really a ham.

"Speaking of food, do you think we can get out of here now? How about giving me a hand back to the truck. I seemed to have sprained my ankle."

With the dogs tucked away in their cages we collapse into the front seat.

"Never drove my truck before huh, Joe? Good time for you to try her out." (Don't want to let him know I'm too weak to drive.)

"Boy, what a good day, don't forget to wave to Aunt Mildred on the way out. By the way Joe, stop at the first McDonald's you come to."





The Old Man, The Buck and The Boy:

# *A Deer Hunter's Thanksgiving*

By Tom Fegely

THE OLD MAN crumpled the bulky day-old paper, lit his pipe for the 13th time, and swung his easy chair to gaze through the frosted window onto the far hill, newly covered with the season's first snow.

Thanksgiving had always signaled happy times in The Old Man's house, and they were enjoyed more than any other holiday because buck season always arrived soon after.

But this year just wasn't the same, even though the family would be arriving in a couple hours—as they did every Thanksgiving morn—and the house would come alive with sounds.

Now it was quiet, the way The Old Man had increasingly come to enjoy his retirement years. And this Thanksgiving Day, as never before, he wished the festivities would be over rather than just beginning. In fact, he didn't even look forward to seeing the rest of the family, nor did he relish the thought of trying to act happy when his thoughts kept drifting back to times when Thanksgiving mornings were different.

"I think I'll head out onto the The Knob for an hour or so," The Old Man yelled to his wife who was busying herself in the kitchen, putting the finishing touches on a matched pair of pumpkin pies.

"Be careful," she warned as he began to close the front door. "The snow makes it slippery on that mountain, you know! And you ain't as good as you used to be at walkin' them hills."

The Old Man answered with a low "Hrummpf!" and slammed the door, putting the first marks in the fresh snow that blanketed the yard.

He didn't need any warnings. He'd

traveled the trail to The Knob hundreds, more like thousands, of times. Along with the well-worn whitetail highways that sliced through the hillside woods, there also was one of his own, one pressed over the years to his favorite peak overlooking his woodland home, the farm and the bottomland where he had hunted grouse and deer since he was a boy.

The Old Man hadn't been feeling well lately. Arthritic legs slowed his ascent and the mild winter cold brought on new aches deep in his chest. For an ex-lumberjack and farmer it wasn't easy to admit that age was slowing him down. And this year, for the first time, the approach of the buck opener didn't excite him.

## More Serious Matters

But it wasn't the slow-arriving pains that had filled The Old Man's thoughts in recent weeks. More serious matters, troubles The Old Man had thought he'd sorted out many years before, were again filling his waking hours and bringing tears to his swollen eyes at night.

Part way up the trail, through the cluster of "popples" that lined the creek bottom and past the pine stand he'd planted with his own hands nearly three decades back, The Old Man paused to catch his breath.

I'm not gonna quit, he thought. It just ain't right, knowin' that Joey's countin' on me to show him a buck.

Joey was The Old Man's grandson. The pair had traced this same trail together dozens of times, ever since the youngster was just beginning to walk and had to be carried most of the way up and back.

For the past six years or so The Boy had spent his two-week summer vacation at the farm, away from the city that The Old Man despised. On Thanksgiving mornings the two would escape the incessant, pre-dinner gabfest in the kitchen and go searching for deer tracks on the hilltop. They'd always find a fresh buck track or two and The Boy would learn about buck rubs, drummin' logs, porcupine cuttin's and other such "country doin's," as The Old Man called them.



This year Joey turned 12 and would be experiencing his first buck opener. His Mom had agreed to leave him with his grandparents after Thanksgiving Day and pick him up the following Monday night. Although she was city-raised and prone to thinking of hunting as unnecessary and primitive, as city folks tend to do, she also knew how much her husband, The Old Man's son, had enjoyed the sport—a joy cut short one hot rainy morning in Vietnam.

And she'd also heard The Old Man plotting with Joey on numerous visits, telling him such things as: "When you're

old enough we're gonna get you out on that ridge where the big bucks live."

Joey was now of age.

On every visit The Boy would become more intrigued by The Old Man's scrapbook. He'd spend hours flipping through the dog-eared pages and asking the same questions.

"Tell me about how you got Old Blackhorn," the youngster would beg whenever he came to the stained picture of the 12-pointer The Old Man dragged home one frosty December morning in 1938. Then he'd gaze at the magnificent animal's dusty dark rack hanging over the fireplace, tacked next to a small fork-horn that also commanded a place of honor, while The Old Man ritualistically tapped his pipe on the hearth, stuffed the bowl with fresh tobacco and labored over getting it lit.

**"TELL ME** about how you got Old Blackhorn," the youngster would beg whenever he came to the stained picture of the 12-pointer The Old Man dragged home one frosty morning in 1938.

It never took much encouragement for The Old Man to start spinning his yarns. But not until The Old Man had thrown a fresh oak log in the fireplace, the two had settled back on the overstuffed couch, and the pipesmoke curled up around his white-whiskered face did he begin.

It was still a good mile to The Knob and The Old Man knew he had to hurry to make it in time or his late return would raise his wife's hackles. But trips up the beaten path were never fast ones, even in The Old Man's prime. And no matter how hard he tried to ignore the spot where he'd posted Jack on his first hunt nearly three decades ago, he never could.

It was always a bittersweet memory. And it had turned into a bittersweet place. Jack was his son—a son who'd grown up among the deer and grouse on The Knob and the brook trout in the valley stream that sliced through the pasture. Together they'd shared hunts and walks, memories that still flashed in



The Old Man's dreams and woke him on hot summer nights.

"Gotta go to the bathroom," he'd tell his wife at such times. "Just you go on back to sleep now."

But he never fooled her. Not for a minute. She often heard him crying over the days and months following word of Jack's death. And when he'd return to bed she'd turn to give him a kiss, often feeling the wetness of his beard where tears had ended their journeys.

The Old Man could not forget the look on his son's face when he returned to the jackpine stand on that cold November morning of long ago, after having heard a lone shot, and found the boy straddling a fat Y-buck.

"I got him, Dad!"

"I really got him," the youngster had yelled when he saw his father's Woolrich-wrapped form appear through the tangle of laurel.

"You sure did, Son," The Old Man had calmly responded. "Hit him just where I told you it would do the job quickest."

"I'm proud of you, son," he'd told him, firmly clasping the boy's cold, trembling hand.

Although The Old Man had hidden his desire to jump and shout and celebrate the moment of joy at that time, this day's thoughts were different. Before again setting out on the path he removed the red handkerchief that incessantly trailed from his back pocket and wiped a tear from his cheek, trying to focus his sights and thoughts, instead, on the top of The Knob.

Twenty minutes later The Old Man finally rounded the flattened rim that led to The Lookout—a name that Jack had provided the rocky outcrop at The Knob's peak, where he once proclaimed, "I can see the whole world from here."

Indeed, for many years it was The World: at least to The Old Man and his son. The view spread beyond the valley and onto the far mountainsides. Four counties were visible from The Lookout and the pair would come here often. But not only to hunt.

It was a place where father and son

could talk. About life. About deer. About fat gray squirrels and raucous blue jays. And, on occasion, about death.

It was also a place where The Old Man would pray. Not a churchgoer he, nevertheless, felt closer to God here than anywhere else, and in the days following his son's burial he traveled to The Lookout each day to be alone and work out the sorrow and bitterness he felt inside.

That's why he was here again today. The once joyful holiday seasons had somehow turned into sad times for the time-toughened farmer, but he refused to cry in front of his wife. Now tears streamed down his leathery cheeks, forming ice crystals in his smokey-white beard.

A sound behind The Old Man suddenly brought him from past to present. He froze, then slowly turned his head.

There, in back of a deadfall, stood one of the biggest bucks he'd seen on the knob in his half-century of wanderings.

#### No Immediate Danger

The stag was staring straight at The Old Man but it somehow knew it was in no immediate danger.

The Old Man stood cautiously.

The buck didn't move.

A 10-pointer, The Old Man whispered to himself, counting each tine to be sure. A beauty.

Bet he's got some of Old Blackhorn's blood pumpin' through his veins, thought The Old Man as he studied the russet antlers.

Without a sound the sleek buck dropped its head and moved around to the end of the deadfall. It paused to again study The Old Man, then slowly turned, fanned its tail, and in three bounds was over the ridge and out of sight.

The Old Man couldn't contain himself. Despite the crusted snow that lingered on the trail he double-timed it down the path to tell his wife of the big buck, retracing his own fresh footprints and those created by the buck as it had followed him up the slope.

Moments later a faraway shout caused

him to stop and tip his head. Over his own heaving gasps and the whistle of a breeze in the pines The Old Man could hear a boy's voice piercing the leafless woods.

"Grandpa, are you up there?"

"I'm here, Joey," he shouted back. "C'mon up! Hurry! I wanna show you something."

Soon he could see a bright orange coat weaving in and out of the maples and beeches.

"Look Grandpa," the youngster commanded. "Mom bought me a new coat for buck season."

"And a corduroy cap, too. Just like the one in Dad's pictures."

It was the stamp of approval that both The Old Man and The Boy wanted.

Joey was the image of his father at 12. And The Old Man could see the same gait in the way The Boy walked and ran. For a moment he pictured Jack running toward him.

"Good to see you again, Grandpa. I really missed you," said Joey, giving The

**THE OLD MAN hustled the youngster up to the place where he'd just seen the big deer. But this time up, somehow, The Old Man's legs were more limber and he almost ran along the slippery trail. "Look at those tracks," he said. "This is where he stood lookin' at me."**



Old Man a quick hug, bringing him back to the moment at hand.

The Old Man turned and hustled the youngster up to the place where he'd just seen the big deer. But this time up, somehow, The Old Man's legs were more limber and he almost ran along the slippery trail; The Boy lagged ten steps behind.

"Look at those tracks," he said. "This is where he stood lookin' at me."

"I'll bet he's related to Old Blackhorn. Ain't never seen a buck that big up here—other than Blackhorn, of course."

The two lingered for awhile and shared the Old Man's sudden burst of excitement, then turned and headed back down the slope toward the house, chattering all the way.

When they arrived at the spot where The Old Man's tracks had paused on the way up the mountain, Joey asked, "Isn't this where Dad got his first buck?"

"This is it all right," the Old Man answered.

"Can I sit here on Monday morning? Just like Dad used to?" The Boy asked.

"Sure can," said The Old Man. "I was gonna put you right here anyway. Good spot, you know. Your Dad got his first buck here—and his last one, too. It came out right over there, where that big beech stands."

"I think he'd really like it if you'd sit in his spot. You know, maybe that big buck will come down over the hill to us. But you gotta sit still, you know. These old bucks are smart and if that's Blackhorn's son you'll hafta be especially still and quiet cuz . . ."

Back at the house the driveway was filled with cars. The family had arrived and the solitude was gone. The mixed smells of roast turkey and pumpkin pie penetrated the cool air in the mud room as The Old Man and The Boy entered and removed their boots.

"This is gonna be the best Thanksgiving ever," said Joey, slinging his arm around his grandfather's waist.

"It sure is Son," said The Old Man, a wide smile stretching across his whiskered face.

"It sure is!"





ROCKY COLAVITO dropped this Pike County trophy on the morning of the first day of last year's bear season.

# Our First Bear

By Rocky Colavito

**I**T WAS the Sunday before the '86 bear season. We were traveling a curvy rural road, about one-half mile from our Pike County destination, when I commented to my hunting partners—son Steve, friend Frank and his son Frankie—as to why a car had picked this spot to pull over. We quickly found out why. Steve yelled, "There's a bear!" It was quite impressive. There was 12 inches of space between his chest and the ground, and the width of his haunches was tremendous. We guessed his weight to be 450 to 500 pounds. It was an educated guess as we've seen quite a few bear at the check station at Shohla.

The bear drifted out of sight, and we continued on. We hadn't gone more than 100 yards when Steve hollered, "There's another bear!" This one was farther into the woods and, having to watch the road, I didn't get to see it, much to

my disappointment. I've hunted bear for many years, but until now I had never even seen one in the wild.

Well, one can imagine the excitement and the flow of adrenaline the sightings created. We couldn't stop talking about them as we unpacked our gear. We put away the provisions we bought just prior to seeing the bear. The reason I mention these provisions is because the restaurant where we were staying is closed on Mondays at that time of the year.

## Good Friends

We were staying at Mt. Haven, not far from Milford, with my good friends Andy Filone, and his brothers Tony and John. Andy, Tony and John are owners of the resort. They are great people and you won't find better food anywhere. It's absolutely the finest, and I've eaten all over the country.

Andy is always telling me of bear

sightings when we talk over the phone, so we couldn't wait to tell him what we had just seen within a half-mile of his front door. To add to the excitement, after a great dinner, we all went spotlighting. We saw 12 bucks, some impressive and one outstanding. He was at least a 10-pointer, possibly 12, with a nice spread and thick antlers.

After spotting for about an hour and a half we headed back to our cabin for some sleep. Before calling it a night, though, we decided on our game plan for the next morning. Frank and Frankie wanted to hunt low, while Steve and I were happy to hunt high in the same area. Doing it that way, we felt we were covering the area as well as it could be with four hunters. Then we hit the sack.

We were up by four o'clock, and after a good breakfast of juice, eggs, toast and coffee, Steve and I took Frank and Frankie to the lower area. We then drove to the higher area, parked the Land Cruiser, and headed for our stands.

### Foggy Morning

It was a foggy morning, not very cold, and most of the snow had melted. It was just getting light when we spotted a large fresh bear track on a well-worn trail. We decided that that was where Steve should stand. I wanted him to get a bear as much as I wanted one myself, and this spot afforded him an excellent chance. He was a few yards from the trail, and had good visibility in all directions, especially downhill where Frank and his son were.

I moved on about another hundred yards or so and found another good area that also provided fine visibility. I settled myself against a large pine to break up my outline and give me some protection from a light mist that was falling. Then I waited.

The next hour and a half was spent scanning the terrain. I remember checking my watch at 8:40 and thinking that in 20 minutes I would call Steve to find out if he had seen anything. Steve and I have walkie-talkies, and our first

call is at 9:00 or ten minutes after a shot. From then on our procedure is to check in on the hour through 11:00. We do this in the event one of us gets a bear and needs help, and also just to make sure everything is going well. We hold noise to a minimum by using ear jacks and by whispering.

I was standing, leaning against the pine tree, and keeping track of the time. At one point I slowly turned. That's when I saw him. I couldn't believe my eyes. He was on all fours, big and beautifully black. A second after I first saw him he raised up on his hind legs and began sniffing the air. I quickly raised my 7mm Magnum, put the crosshairs on his shoulder and fired. I knew I hit him but he didn't move. As fast as I could, I bolted in another round, dropped to one knee, and fired again. The bear fell sideways, like a slow-falling tree, and was then still.

I waited about five minutes, never taking my eyes off of him. Needless to say, I had bolted in another round—just in case. I checked my watch and saw that I had about five minutes before getting on the walkie-talkie.

I quickly covered the 50 yards to where the bear lay, but approached him very carefully with rifle ready. That wasn't necessary. He was dead. I looked him over real well and couldn't help but admire his beauty. His fur was prime. I was elated.

I called Steve and his first question was if I had shot. I told him I had one down, but that I wished he had been the one to get it. He was happy for me and very excited. "I'll be right there," he said, and signed off.

A few minutes later he was at my side with his hand extended, congratulating me. He then leaned over the bear, looked him over, and then looked up at me and said, "Our first bear, and what a beauty!"

The author formerly played baseball for the Cleveland Indians and several other major league teams.





HAVING NOW CHASED ringnecks for somewhat over four decades, several "true facts" (as Casey Stengel used to say) have become abundantly clear to me. They are . . .

# The Mysterious Flying Pheasant

*(and other myths)*

**By Jim Bashline**

WRITING about ring-necked pheasants is relatively easy. That's because anything one can say about them can actually happen. On the other hand, any reader's experiences may not coincide with what any writer's have been. Therefore, pheasant comment and advice can be anything we'd like it to be and so can anyone else's. There now, the editor of this magazine likes opening paragraphs that are stimulating and thought provoking. As you can see, I've tried to do that by being as concise as possible. (How's that again?)

Having now chased ringnecks for somewhat over four decades, several "true facts" (as Casey Stengel used to say) have become abundantly clear to me. They are:

1. Most pointing dogs are afraid of pheasants because they eat them. (No, I don't mean dogs eat pheasants—well, some of them do—but pheasants eat dogs!)

2. Pheasants can read.

3. As pheasants grow older their feathers, somehow, become coated with a combination of steel plate and Teflon.

4. Few pheasants east of the Mississippi River can fly, and in Pennsylvania, a *very* few of them do.

An understanding of these four "facts" may or may not help you put more birds in your game bag, but at least you'll be a better informed hunter, which is why you're reading this—isn't it?

Now then, the business of pheasants

eating dogs is a far more common occurrence than most hunters might suspect. Oddly, it seldom happens in full view of anyone, nor does it happen to certain breeds of canines. Labradors are not eaten often, nor are St. Bernards. Probably because Labs themselves eat just about every rotten substance found afield, they probably don't taste good to even a hungry ringneck. St. Bernards are capable of eating even larger quantities of such substances and are seldom used as pheasant dogs anyway. Pointers, setters, German shorthairs, Brittanies and Weimaraners are the varieties eaten most often. I know this is true because only last year I was a participant in a ringneck hunt where a young black-and-white setter vanished from the face of the earth.

### Familiar Name

The dog's name was You Dumb #@\*%#! Owners of pointing dogs will be familiar with that name because that's what three-quarters of them end up calling their dogs. Anyway, less than three minutes after the dog had been released to do his pheasant finding thing, it disappeared over the first knoll. The next sound we heard was a flurry of pheasants flushing; the dog was never seen again. Note: we didn't actually see a pheasant, but many past experiences of a similar nature led to the obvious conclusion. The pheasants simply carried the dog away and ate it at their leisure. Before you scoff at this, just consider how many times you've been present when a dog vanished under the same circumstances. Occasionally, a dog escapes the talons of a hungry ringneck to be found battered and bruised a week later. The experience must be highly traumatic as few such dogs ever

regain their hunting composure and many won't even look at a photo of a ringneck.

That pheasants can read is seldom disputed by knowledgeable hunters. Cockbirds learn to read earlier than hens. This is particularly evident south of I-80, but all of them eventually master such phrases as Safety Zone, No Hunting, No Trespassing, Restricted Area, Blasting in Progress and Keep Out. They can also read calendars and they pay close attention to opening and closing dates of hunting seasons. Pheasants read a lot during the summer months, too, mostly ballistic tables, gun catalogs and cook books.

Several years ago, after finally killing one particular pheasant that I'd chased through parts of three townships, I sent some feather samples to the Pentagon. You can imagine my surprise when, four days later, three generals arrived in a Chinook helicopter, landing smack in the middle of my driveway. They demanded to know how in the world I had managed to obtain samples of a new material they said was "top secret." When I explained where the samples had come from, they expressed doubt and explained that the physical properties of the pheasant feathers were precisely like those of a new combination steel-Teflon fabric that was about to be deployed as a bulletproof shield around the cockpits of jet fighters. After considerable interrogation, the generals were finally satisfied that I wasn't part of an enemy plot and flew away. Later that year I came across a news item in the paper that announced that the government was now engaged in raising pheasants at an undisclosed site in south-central Pennsylvania. The story went on to say that no one knew why this was

## Thoughts While Walking

*Firearms stand next in importance to the Constitution itself. They are the American people's liberty teeth and keystone under independence.*

—George Washington



**DON'T** carry any reading material while hunting, and if you catch a pheasant reading during the off season, call the nearest conservation officer and have the bird arrested.

being done. But we know, don't we?

I was astounded to discover that pheasants in Iowa are frequent fliers. A late season hunt in that state last year was a lot of fun and some birds were put in the freezer. All of them were shot in the head. (The Iowa birds also have the steel-Teflon feathers and must be hit in the head because that's the only part of the anatomy where the shot deflecting plumage doesn't grow.) The Iowan birds are not quite as accomplished readers as are our Pennsylvania ringnecks but they're picking up on it fast. In view of this, Iowa game law now includes a regulation that prohibits the carrying of any printed material pertaining to pheasant season by a hunter in the field. The loss of such material could cause a speedup in the pheasant literacy process. And by the way, Iowa hunters confirmed the *true fact* about pheasants eating dogs. Sixty-one pointing dogs were lost to them in 1987. Not a trace mind you!

This non-flying pheasant phenomenon here in Pennsylvania was not always the norm. Ah, how well I recall the good old days when birds would launch into the air with a rousing cackle and hang there for a second allowing a decent shot. Today, the flying birds are nearly gone, and we must content ourselves with the runners, the scooters, the sneakers, the down-the-holers. On rare occasions we might see a pheasant in the air at a football field's length away . . . but that's only because it's trying to lure our dog to a secret place in order to make a meal out of it.

I'm sure you've suspected that these *true facts* were really so for some time, but simply didn't want to accept the reality of it. I'll admit that I didn't want to accept them either. But it's hard to reject such solid evidence and we've got to stick together to change things. Here are a few ideas along those lines: Coat your dog with some foul smelling substance before it gets into it by itself. The



ringnecks might be tricked into thinking it's a Lab. Follow the Iowa example by not carrying any reading material while hunting. Write no graffiti on barn sides, and if you catch a pheasant reading during the off season, call the nearest conservation officer and have the bird arrested. Practice shooting at ping-pong balls during the summer so you can make more head shots come fall. And finally, set up flight training centers for pheasant chicks so they can learn, at an early age, that flying is fun and something they will enjoy if they put their minds to it.

Editors Note: After reviewing the author's manuscript and having considerable consultation with Game Commission biologists we decided we could not suppress the information and opinions herein. While we don't agree with all of Bashline's "true facts," those of us in the editorial department who have spent some time hunting pheasants must admit there is some validity to his comments. And we're happy about that. After all, that's why we call it hunting.



Scott  
Alpino



# Checklist for Better Squirrel Hunting

By Don Feigert

**S**KUNKED, I thought, as I emerged from a favorite oak-and-hickory woodlot into the bright midday sun. I'd hunted all morning and I didn't get one shot. Two quick bushytail glimpses was it. It had been, I concluded, one of those days.

Then I recalled the hunt I'd had a few mornings before, three sightings, two shots, one gray squirrel; not much better. Two poor squirrel hunts in a row, I thought. Well, I rationalized, I do use a 22. I would have had a limit each day if I had used my 20-gauge. I didn't bother to explain to myself how, no matter what the artillery, two sightings could bring in six squirrels.

I don't consider myself a meat hunter. The pleasures afield and the challenge of testing my hunting skills against a wary adversary more than compensate for an empty game bag.

I have to admit, however, despite the pleasures of being outdoors, successful hunts are more rewarding than unsuccessful ones. But now, whenever my productivity lags, I refer back to a series of questions I jotted down and have revised over the years. I call these questions my squirrel hunter's checklist.

## The Checklist

*Am I hunting the right places?* Squirrels are an abundant game animal and part of the fun in hunting them lies in the hunter's confidence that, unlike bear hunting or buck hunting, he will see several of them while hunting.

I go squirrel hunting about a dozen times a year. On eight or nine of those occasions I hunt one of three or four areas that I really like and have hunted during previous seasons. Whenever I

hunt these traditional spots I am alert not only to the number of squirrel sightings but also to the number and quality of nests, den trees, mast and other indicators. If these clues suggest a diminishing squirrel population and the area stops producing for me, I'll give up on the spot.

On other excursions I explore new territory. These usually are areas I find during preseason scouting or in deer season. Hunting new grounds appeals to my sense of discovery.

A squirrel hunter should see game. I expect to see at least one per hour of hunting, and consider twice that a good average. Anything less means I'm not hunting in the right places.

*Am I hunting at the right times?* I like the first three hours of daylight, with late afternoon as my second choice. I do not like hunting in the middle of the day, when squirrels are generally inactive. Nor do I like all day hunts, especially during the early season. Briefer outings enable me to keep up my intense concentration.

Good squirrel hunters are in the woods before daylight, just as deer hunters are. That's the most productive time for hunting and it allows me to watch daybreak in the woodlands.

Many hunters make the mistake of pursuing squirrels only in early fall. They should try the hickory woodlots later in the season. Combining an early morning squirrel hunt with a midday rabbit, grouse or pheasant hunt can be productive and enjoyable.

A November squirrel hunt, for example, is dramatically different from an October outing. The weather is cooler. The bright blue sky and orange leaves of October give way to Novem-

ber grays and foreboding weather. The gray-on-gray-on-gray of squirrels against trees against clouds provides a melancholy setting, increasing the esthetic value of the hunt. Esthetics aside, the leaves are gone in November. Hunters can easily see squirrels, but squirrels can see hunters. That provides an extra challenge, particularly for stillhunters.

Winter often offers more hours of productive hunting. Snow cover lets us locate squirrels, even in midday, by the tracks of their earlier morning movements. Good hunters keep records of their successes according to the time of the year and time of the day in order to determine the most productive hunting in their particular locations.



*Am I using the right equipment?* I think it's a good idea for a hunter to select a squirrel rifle that has the same type action as his deer rifle. I definitely prefer the bolt action for both. The slide action is great for shotgunning and the sporty lever action is fun to shoot, but the look, feel, and precision of the bolt action make it ideal for the rifle toting squirrel hunter.

Scopes, of course, should be mounted properly, and checked frequently. Once I put a new scope on an old bolt action fun gun and took it on a weekend trip three hours northeast of my western Pennsylvania home. Before I left I fired and fired that gun until I had fine tuned the scope so well I could put a one-hole 3-shot group into a dime-size bull at 50 yards. Satisfied, I cased the gun, placed it in the car with my other gear, and took off.

The next morning I fired twice at a squirrel perched on a limb and didn't come close enough to even scare the animal away. Just a glance at the gun and I could see the scope was way off line. That scope did not fit that gun, and the three-hour drive had jarred it way off center. I had to hunt with open sights the rest of the day. My mountain-county pals still like to toss that story around over an open campfire.

*Am I shooting well enough?* Every now and then I place an empty soda can 40 yards down range and fire off five shots from an offhand standing position. If I don't hit the can four out of five times, something is wrong and a practice session is required.

**EVERY NOW** and then I place an empty soda can 40 yards down range and fire off five shots from an offhand standing position. If I don't hit the can at least four times, something is wrong and a practice session is required.

I used to own an old bolt action rimfire that was perfect for teaching or practicing shooter's skills because it would misfire about once every ten shots. There's nothing like a misfire to detect pull instead of squeeze in a shooter's touch on the trigger.

Another technique I find valuable is to concentrate on keeping the sights on the target after the shot is fired. That's easy to do with 22s because there is no recoil. Deliberately holding on the target after the shot greatly reduces the tendency to pull or jerk away at the critical moment.

During a serious practice session or



when sighting in a gun, shooters should use at least sandbags, and a shooter's bench is even better. In the woods we should use tree trunks or branches as rests whenever possible. Accuracy increases significantly as a result.

In addition to knowing how to shoot, good hunters also know when to shoot. Guesswork is involved, but experienced hunters are familiar with how squirrels move and they develop the ability to fire quickly when the squirrel pauses. Good hunters also know their own abilities and do not take shots that are way out of range.

*Am I being careful enough?* Dedicated hunters take even small-game hunting seriously and constantly strive to do their best. A good stand hunter may appear passive at rest, but that is an intentional illusion. He's attempting to assimilate himself into Nature's background while maintaining an active surveillance all around.

To test how well I've blended into my surroundings I consider my last ten squirrel sightings. If six or seven of these were spotted near the perimeter of my visual range, or just out of their dens or cover, I feel I've been paying attention. If too many squirrels caught me off guard or just seemed to appear up close, then my hunting apparently has become lazy, indicating I need to sharpen my concentration level.

The most important element in squirrel hunting, however, is selecting the stand. Good hunters pay close attention to habitat factors and squirrel population indicators throughout the year and then select their stands accordingly.

*Is my stillhunting still enough?* Many hunters who think they are stillhunting are actually just taking a walk in the woods. They are not hunting hard enough. They may cover a lot of territory, but they are doing so as obvious intruders.

Stillhunting is a most difficult technique. One must move without appearing to move and without making

noise. Although difficult, still hunting can be the most effective means for finding squirrels, especially in a larger woods where game isn't as concentrated, but only if the conditions are right. A windless October morning with a misty drizzle is perfect. Leaves on the ground must be wet enough to allow the hunter to move quietly. Some tree foliage helps also. Late November is a difficult time to stillhunt because the leaves are gone and everything is exposed.

Stillhunting is really a series of brief stand hunts. Good hunters move inconspicuously and learn to blend into the forest background during pauses. They are constantly alert to visual and audio clues signaling the presence of game. Furthermore, they know their hunting grounds well enough to have an idea where they are moving to and coming from.

I like to think back over the last ten squirrels I have sighted while stillhunting. If at least seven of those were spotted before they saw me, I am doing okay. If not, I had better work on the subtlety of my movements in the woods.

*Is my second effort strong enough?* Effective hunting consists of three phases: preparation, the hunting action itself, and the follow-up. The third phase includes not only tracking down wounded game, which all hunters should do religiously, but also the pursuit of animals sighted and missed or not shot at at all.

If a squirrel takes refuge in a tree that has no dens or nests, it can be taken easily through the "circling buddy" technique. One hunter stands and watches while the other moves noisily around to the opposite side of the tree. There's a good chance the squirrel will reveal itself to the standing hunter as it slips around the tree to avoid the noisy one. If a hunter is alone, I recommend the "single hunter circle," which involves much more perseverance. With this technique the hunter moves back and forth, frequently cross-



ing under the tree, and walking in half-circles at different distances until he can work into position for a shot.

There is, of course, the old “waiting game” technique, in which the hunter waits either at the base of the tree or at the spot where he was when the squirrel was seen last. Sometimes, after ten minutes or so, a frightened squirrel will leave its sanctuary and make a break for it. There are times, though, when even a 30-minute wait isn’t long enough. I prefer to move to a different side of the tree from where I shot at or sighted the squirrel, a side that offers other shooting possibilities. If the original squirrel comes out of hiding, fine. If not, I might get shooting at other squirrels in the area.

*Are negative factors interfering?* Sometimes success depends on factors that are beyond our control. Severe weather conditions are an obvious example. Just because a hunter may be

**I PARTICULARLY** favor squirrel hunting because it’s a relatively leisure activity, and I especially enjoy the solitude. I love to escape the artificial and hectic world of business and fade into Nature’s landscape.

crazy enough to go out in a storm or blizzard doesn’t mean the squirrels will cooperate.

Weather not nearly so extreme can interfere with hunting success, too. A beautiful sunny October morning with temperatures in the 50s and a good stiff breeze kicking up may seem like an ideal time to be outdoors chasing bushytails. But just the wind will probably ruin the hunt. Hunters learn early that squirrels are inactive on windy days, and they go rabbit, pheasant or grouse hunting when such conditions exist.

*Am I having enough fun?* Enjoyment is the primary reason I and, I think, most others hunt. I particularly favor squirrel hunting because it’s a relatively leisure activity, and I especially enjoy the solitude. I love to escape the artificial and hectic world of business and fade into Nature’s landscape. I love the smell of wet leaves on the ground and the sight of dew-dropped branches at daybreak. I love to sit back in silence and watch deer, birds, chipmunks, and raccoons in their natural settings.

But I also love to hunt, and success does count. Effective hunters set goals and evaluate results. I personally like to spend three or four hours in a woods where I have confidence. I feel I should see at least six or seven squirrels, shoot at three or four, and bag two or three. Anything less and I’m not satisfied. If a negative trend develops and continues for any length of time, I review my checklist and get the basics squared away. On a review I usually find something to turn the trend toward better success.





ESPY HAD almost given up hope of spotting the deer again. But finally, while circling a laurel thicket, he jumped the buck and got off a single shot.

## November Ritual

By Michael L. Morgart

**L**AST NIGHT it turned cold in my corner of the world. Fall had been teasing since late September, and October's beautiful colors had recently given way to browns and grays. But at dusk last night, while I stood on the back porch with my Labrador retriever, and we both strained our ears to hear geese that never called, I felt November arrive. As the darkening sky turned from red to gray, and the white pines on the hill whispered of wind not yet blowing, I knew it was time for my November ritual.

I went inside, with the Lab at my heels, and built a small fire in the fireplace. Then I went to my gun cabinet, opened it up, and dug through the boxes of reloads and duck calls until I came up with the book I was searching for. It was old and dirty, and its once smooth leather cover was cracked and mildewed. Nonetheless,

that old book is the integral part of my ritual; the ritual that for me heralds the arrival of fall.

I took the old diary and settled in by the fire, with the Lab on the rug nearby. Though the pages aren't numbered, I knew from past years where to turn to find what I was looking for. I gently flipped through the crumbling leaves of bold script until I reached one headed "November." And there I began once again to read a story that I already knew by heart.

Espy Diehl arrived home on leave from the Army in mid-November. He'd had a long train ride and a seemingly longer walk home from the station to his family's farm 12 miles away in Friend's Cove. It was his first visit home in many months and, though exhausted from the

trip, he gladly joined his younger brother Levi with the chores.

Levi had done an admirable job of keeping the farm running since the boys' father had fallen ill a month earlier. With the help of some neighbors, the crops had been brought in and the farm had been partly readied for winter. The daily milking and feeding still needed to be done, and there wasn't much wood cut for the wood stove. But Levi had struggled on, hoping that any day his father would be well enough to leave his bed, or at least his brother Espy might arrive to help.

With Espy temporarily back on the farm, the thought of the winter's arrival probably seemed a little more bearable. During the days that followed the boys worked hard at cutting and splitting firewood, mending fences, and caring for the livestock. At night they sat with their mother, sisters, and ailing father in their parents' bedroom and told them of their day's efforts.

One morning, about four days before Espy was to leave home for the Army, the boys awoke to find the ground white with three inches of snow. It covered the farm and all of Friend's Cove like a clean white blanket. Espy and Levi went about their chores as usual until Levi, while leading a team of horses through the orchard, discovered a fresh set of deer tracks. He hurried to the barn to tell Espy, who returned with Levi to investigate. Both boys were excited by the find and went to tell their father as deer had long been a rarity in the area. After due deliberation, their father gave

Espy his rifle and told him to track the deer and try to get a shot at it. If he could kill it, a good size deer would supply the family with meat for weeks. So, while Levi went back to the chores, Espy took his father's rifle and went out to the orchard. He quickly found the trail in the partly melted snow and set about tracking the deer.

The trail wound out of the orchard and across the farm. Espy found where the deer had fed at a corn shock and where it had bedded down in a patch of thorn trees. Then it left the farm and made its way up the side of Evitts Mountain. Espy followed slowly and carefully, always watching for the deer out ahead. By dark he was two hours from the farm and had glimpsed the deer, a small buck, only once. Unfortunately, it had seen him first and had quickly lengthened the distance between them, leaving Espy without a shot.

Espy spent the cold night in an abandoned cabin on the mountain. His supper was a hunk of bread and an apple that his mother had packed for him in case the hunt turned out to be a long one. At daybreak he was back on the trail and found that the startled deer had headed down off of Evitts Mountain. He spent all morning trailing it back across Friends Cove and then up onto Tussey Mountain. By early afternoon of the second day the snow was nearly gone, and Espy had almost given up hope of spotting the deer again. But finally, while circling a laurel thicket, Espy jumped the buck and got off a single shot. He followed the blood trail along the ridge and found the deer lying dead against a log.

Espy dressed the deer and dragged it down off the mountain. He then walked back to the farm and got Levi to help him bring the deer in. In all of the distance that he had walked trailing and dragging the buck, Espy never crossed



**BOTH BOYS** were excited by the find and went to tell their father as deer had long been a rarity in the area. After due deliberation, their father gave Espy his rifle and told him to track the deer and try to get a shot.



another set of deer tracks. Deer were scarce in Friends Cove then.

By the time the boys got the deer back to the farm it was well after dark. But before they could skin and clean it, their father insisted they wrap the buck in an old canvas and carry it upstairs to his second floor bedroom so he, too, could see Espy's trophy. A deer kill was something to be celebrated.

The next day the boys were back at their usual chores. Two days after that, Espy met the train that took him back to the Army.

*I usually stop reading at that point, my ritual complete. But the story goes on to tell of Espy's return to Army life and of the months that followed for him and his comrades. By spring his hopes of getting home soon had all but vanished, and by June he was among troops marching south through Virginia. Espy would never return to farm and hunt in the valley he'd grown up in. The last page of the diary is in another man's handwrit-*

Bear hunters, if you're fortunate to get a bear, please take care of its skull. Every year some priceless trophies are needlessly destroyed by processors and taxidermists who don't realize the significance of bear skulls. Don't let it happen to yours.

*ing, possibly that of his brother Levi.*

Espy Diehl of the 55th Pennsylvania Volunteers died in the Service of his Country in the Confederate Andersonville Prison, Georgia. He is sorely missed.

*I closed the diary and returned it to its place of honor in my gun cabinet. Then I settled back in my chair and watched the fire die, with images of my grandmother's grandfather helping his brother drag home a deer. The Lab snored peacefully by my side, surely dreaming of distant marshes, as I wondered what the coming winter might hold in store for me.*

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**I FROZE**, with my eye off the scope, wondering if my blaze orange hat and vest would scare the deer off. The deer stared for an eternity (actually about 45 seconds) then went back to feeding.

## Texas Ex

**By Rene Abelardo Gonzalez**

**T**HE SOFT clattering was unmistakable, coming from somewhere below and behind me. Folding the candybar wrapper slowly, I dropped it in my coat pocket and turned to look down the ridge toward the sound.

It was the second day of the 1984 deer season. Columbia County, with its rocky, leave strewn, oak and pine covered ridges, was a long way from the sandy, mesquite and cactus chaparral of the south Texas brush country where I grew up.

In July 1983 my career took me from Austin, Texas, to Philadelphia. There is much to see and do in Philadelphia, but after a few months my wife and I needed to escape the urban environment.

Our first trip was an October visit to SGL 211. We took advantage of an 'Open House' tour we had read about in the local newspaper. The ridges, hills, and autumn flora, so different from

what we had grown up with, elicited in us a range of emotions from joy, wonder and excitement to even a touch of sadness as we saw and heard a large "V" of geese winging their way south.

Later that fall Richard Pyott, a Keystone State native, became my "Friend in Pennsylvania." He introduced me to the wonders of State Game Lands and parks, turkey hunting and trout fishing. I was hooked on Pennsylvania's outdoor recreation opportunities.

When Richard invited me to join his group for the opening of the 1984 deer season he didn't have to wait for an answer. It had been four years since I had shot a deer, a Texas 10-pointer.

Compared to the gray ghosts that quietly travel the sandy soil on my Dad's ranch, this animal sounded like it was kicking every stone in its path. I moved off the rock slab I had been eating lunch on and threw my Mexican wool blanket



against a rock that slanted about 45 degrees away from me. As I knelt on the blanket the sound became sharper. The ridgetop gave me a view down the south side as well as a shorter view to the east.

I took in a sharp breath and my heart rate went up as the deer came into view.

The sun was high and the shadows distinct. The animal was moving through oak and pines, going from west to east. Only part of the gray-brown body was visible. I could tell it was feeding on acorns.

As I increased the magnification on my Leupold the deer turned and looked straight up at me. I froze, with my eye off the scope, wondering if my blaze orange hat and vest would scare the deer off. The deer stared for an eternity (actually, about 45 seconds) then went back to feeding; I went back to breathing.

In the scope I saw the sun flash on an antler—a spike—but he stepped behind trees that blocked my view.

The pounding in my ears matched the dancing crosshairs as I strained to see the spikes again. Six inches long. I couldn't get a clear shot and shooting through the branches was too risky. Anticipating his line of travel, I saw an opening of about 18 inches.

A deep breath calmed me down somewhat as I waited, hoping he wouldn't change direction. The crosshairs were waiting when the shoulder moved into the opening. The Ruger No. 1 came back sharply. The shot sounded oddly muffled due to my excitement and concentration, but the image of the crosshairs on the shoulder was vivid.

The deer kicked wildly and jumped in the air, traveled downhill out of sight, and then stopped with a final crash. I knew it was down but I couldn't see it. Rising to start down the ridge, a shocking realization hit me: There were at least 60 yards between me and the spot I had last seen the deer. All of it was a jumble of boulders, rocks, fallen trees, slippery leaves and loose stones.

The fresh round in the Ruger came out, no sense in scrambling down with a loaded rifle I thought. Once down, it

#### **FLUORESCENT ORANGE:**

**Hunters must wear at least 250 square inches of fluorescent orange on the head, chest and back combined during the bear and regular firearms deer seasons.**

took me less than a minute to find him, a nice spike with antlers about seven inches long. The 7x57's bullet had pierced the heart. I felt like jumping and whooping but settled on a prayer for both of us.

As I contemplated pulling the deer over the rocks and fallen trees, the steep slope appeared twice as long. Going around the side easily tripled the distance. I decided to go straight up. Forty minutes later my legs and arms were almost gone and I was ten yards short of the top. Laughing and talking to myself, I pulled the spike up on sheer determination. It took me two minutes per yard.

#### **Grandfather's Words**

On the crest I remembered my grandfather's words about "the good side" of every hill—the downhill side. The trip down was fast if not easy. Pennsylvania's equivalent of Texas gopher holes and old, buried barbed wire—a loose stone and rotting tree—sped me along.

Disbelief and a little bit of envy met me at the campsite. All the good-natured ribbing about Texas and my Mexican ancestry had been worth it. I was congratulated and declared an "official Pennsylvanian" that day.

Three years have passed. I don't get out as much as I would like due to my job and a new addition to the family. We miss Texas but have come to treasure the richness of Pennsylvania's natural resources. Last fall my wife, 15-month-old son and I went on another Game Lands tour. It was the first time on a Game Lands for him. We photographed him on the Appalachian trail. He took to it like a native Pennsylvanian.





# Once in a Lifetime

By Paul A. Matthews

**T**HERE WILL never be another time like it. Not for me. The years have gone. There's no way I can reach back and feel the elation of those few seconds in the thornapples. Gone in the blink of an eye some 30-odd years ago on a sharp November afternoon.

We started out that morning on a long, sloping side hill near the headwaters of Goose Hollow Creek. The hill was fairly open, save for a patch of shoulder-high pines that had been planted in orderly rows. Old Tip loved to work a pine patch, and in these he found the rabbits plentiful. His deep voice rolled across the flats in the bottom of the hollow like a bugle call, and Lyle and I jockeyed for position.

Back and forth through the pines that rabbit led Old Tip, and every once in a while I'd spot a flash of brown as it broke out near the edge only to dodge back in before I could get a shot. He was a smart rabbit, but he had more than met his match with Old Tip. That dog was the kind a person has but once in a lifetime.

Three-quarters beagle and one-quarter basset, Tip had a nose that was never wrong and more than his share of savvy to go along with it. Once he locked onto a rabbit, he never left its trail until the rabbit either holed or was in the game pocket. That was as certain as night following day. And once the rabbit was taken, Old Tip wasted scarcely a second for a sniff before heading off again.

Rabbits weren't Tip's only field of expertise. In those days ringnecks were still plentiful in the area, and when Tip crossed one you could hear his voice change from the rolling bugle call to a soft whimper or whine. He worked areas where you'd swear a bird couldn't hide, whimpering almost as if he was walking on broken glass.

He was never wrong. You could watch ahead of the dog, trying to spot the bird

before it broke, and just about the time you thought the dog had finally erred, the bird would flush in a blaze of flurry and color that lifted your stomach on a wave of exhilaration.

With grouse he was different yet. He would work close, just close enough so that when he picked up the scent, you could see and hear him blow air out the sides of his mouth, flopping his lips with small popping sounds. And when those sounds increased in tempo, like an over-worked vacuum cleaner, you had better get ready because Mr. Grouse was about to flush.

Ah, what I wouldn't give to see and hear and feel that dog just once more, to have him nuzzle his cold wet nose against my hand just before he jumped onto my lap. But life is a constant change. Today a 40-foot Norway spruce marks his grave down in the front yard. Never do I pass that tree without thinking of Old Tip.

## Long Ago Morning

On that long ago morning Tip worked that rabbit back and forth until finally, in desperation, the rabbit broke out along the border of the pines just long enough to give me a shot. In an instant the antiquated side-by-side Lefever snuggled into place and belched a load of shot. The rabbit rolled end over end.

"Good shot, Dad!"

I turned and George had a grin a yard wide. Only seven years old, he followed me every Saturday, step by step, mile after mile. Too young to carry a gun, all he could do was go with me and watch and savor the comradeship that welds together a father and son. How his spindly legs kept up I'll never know. Our hunting day stretched from dawn till dark, with a few minutes respite at noon to wolf down a pair of sandwiches in the quiet shelter of a scrub pine. But stick with me he did, always three paces be-

hind and always conscious of safety. Years later, as a member of the Marine Corps, his forced marches were little more than an extension of our Saturday rabbit hunts.

By the time I had the rabbit dressed and in my game pocket, Tip had another one going, and Lyle and I again jockeyed for position.

Lyle was born a hunter. Every fiber in his soul hummed with the Cherokee blood handed down from his grandmother. He carried a 16-gauge Fox Sterlingworth that he'd had since late childhood, and almost never did he fail when he pressed the trigger. Lyle was long and lanky, with a drive that sometimes tested our endurance, yet the day was never too long, the hill never too steep, the weather never too sour. We hunted hard and we savored every moment of it. Even today, as I sit here writing these words, I know that someplace in the Great Beyond, Lyle is standing on

a knoll with his Fox double at the ready while Old Tip works a rabbit out of the brush below. Lyle will stand there for hours at a time, waiting for that rabbit.

When the second rabbit broke out of the pines and headed downhill for a hedgerow, I watched Lyle's shotgun flow to his shoulder, heard it bark, saw the rabbit roll. Seconds later Old Tip broke from the pines, nuzzled the rabbit once and then went on downhill to the hedge. It was his signal to move on, though we all knew there were more rabbits to be had in the pines if we wanted to work them.

As the morning wore on we worked along the hedge and across another field of scrub pine and goldenrod and small patches of brush. It was in this area where we lost track of Old Tip. He wasn't sounding off and we couldn't see him in the high goldenrod.

I shouted to Lyle, "Is the dog with you?"

"Can't see 'im, but I think he's ahead of us."

We worked on toward a dirt road where we were going to stop and eat lunch, and where we knew Tip would come to check our location.

Half way or so across the field I heard something—just the hint of a whimper from behind. And even as I turned, bringing the Lefever to my shoulder, I heard the unmistakable cackle and flurry of wings that shouted ringneck. Thirty yards to our rear, that old bird had sat tight while we walked by, until Old Tip worked him out. Now, as the buttstock settled against my shoulder, the bird rose and then leveled out.

Almost instinctively, the right barrel went first, even though my brain was screaming Too far! Too far! Use the left! When the left barrel followed, that magnificent bird crumpled in mid-flight, the bright sun throwing iridescent flashes off its feathers.

I looked at George and his eyes were

**YOU COULD watch ahead of the dog, trying to spot the bird before it broke, and just about the time you thought the dog had finally erred, the bird would flush in a blaze of flurry and color.**





like saucers. In that kid mind of his, at that moment, I stood ten feet tall. And in my own mind, the kid was one of life's greatest treasures.

There, by the side of the road, we ate lunch—cold bean sandwiches mashed into soggy masses from being carried in our pockets, and tangy Northern Spy apples not too long from the tree. And as we sat there letting the blood flow back into our throbbing feet, Lyle nodded toward the area ahead of us and spoke.

"Good place for grouse," he said, "An' rabbits, too."

Looking at the thornapples, I had to agree. Of course we had hunted the area before and knew it was good. But looking at it from the outside—acres and acres of 20-foot thornapples interspersed with scrub pine and a few hardwoods—we always felt we were entering an unexplored jungle. It was a feeling that carried us away from the present cares of the world.

We worked the thornapples slowly, Lyle and I separated by 50 or 60 yards, with Old Tip between the two of us a few yards ahead. We held our guns at the ready, expecting at any moment for the air to erupt in a flurry of brown feathers or the weeds to yield a streak of fur. Yet as we moved silently, step after step toward the hill beyond, nothing stirred. It was almost as though our coming had been predicted and the game had moved out ahead of us. Tension slackened and muscles relaxed, and the shotguns carried at high port began to sag.

Then it happened, that once in a lifetime occurrence that whips your belly into a froth and puts your accumulated ability of years past to the test. The first grouse got up a shade to my left and well out in front, streaking away like a World War II fighter plane. And even as the shotgun was coming up, the second bird rose just to the right of the first, flaring off to the right as it straightened.



#### Question

After killing a deer, while filling out my tag, do I have to complete all the spaces on the tag?

#### Answer

Yes. The tag must be fully completed in compliance with the instructions on it. Attach only the tag to the deer. The tag must remain on the deer until it's processed for consumption or prepared for mounting. Any deer, bear or turkey not properly tagged is considered contraband.

I knew even before I pressed the forward trigger that this was my day, that my swing was right and my timing precise. For at the instant the trigger broke, the first grouse seemed frozen in flight atop the bead on the old Lefever. Without waiting to watch it tumble, I pivoted to the right and sent a charge roaring from the left barrel.

A double! The only double on grouse I ever made in my life. A once-in-a-lifetime shot in the presence of a son and a friend looking on in awe. I can hear him yet as George uttered one soft word that said it all.

"Wow!"

There will never be another time like it. Not for me. George is older now than I was at the time of the incident. Old Tip has been gone for years and Lyle has gone with him. Only the memory remains, a memory of a once-in-a-lifetime day.

That's what hunting is all about.





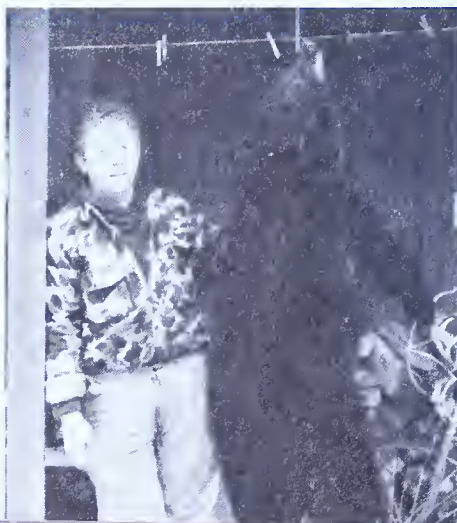
**JASON WERKEISER**, above, New Tripoli, took his 314-pound male from Pike County, while Gary Sandt, below, Saylorsburg, got his trophy in Carbon County.



**LOUIS KANYAR**, above, Trevorton, took his 150-pound bear from Lycoming County. Donald Erdie, below, Bath, went to Pike County for his 284-pound field-dressed bear.



**GLENN FISHER**, left, Langhorne, used a 7mm Mag. to drop this Bradford County bruin. George Stonerod, below, Dalmatia, is pleased with his trophy.



**ED NOCK**, Saylorsburg, got opening day trophy.





# BLACK BEAR TROPHIES



**ANDY GOULD**, Hershey, went to Mifflin County for this 360-pound male.



**CRAIG HOLDREN**, Beaver, dropped this Forest County bruin with one shot from his 30-06. The bear weighed 500 pounds, and its skull measured 20-1.

**WAYNE LUSE**, Aaronsburg, took this bear from Centre County.



**Paul Giles**, both from Pitts-  
burgh County bears on last year's



**JOHN MORGEN**, Philadelphia, hunted for 27 years before dropping a bear, this 230-pound Pike County bruin. "It's just a matter of being in the right place at the right time," says John.



# FIELD NOTES

## Secure

**CRAWFORD COUNTY**—There's a sign at the corner of the Pymatuning Wildlife Management Area administration building that reads "Game Protector" Office. Last summer we found a mallard and a nest full of eggs just below the sign, under an evergreen shrub. I guess that mallard figured she had found the safest place ever to build a nest.—WCO Dave Myers, Linesville.

## In the Field

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—After weeks in the classroom, my fellow trainees and I are anxious to go begin our field assignments. I'm looking forward to meeting, serving, and learning from the many fine sportsmen in the state. Happy hunting.—Trainee Michael G. Ondik.



## Worldwide Popularity

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—Some friends of mine visited China last summer. After landing at the Hong Kong Airport they went to a waiting area lounge and found, on the magazine table, a worn tattered copy of—**GAME NEWS**.—Trainee David E. Beinhaus.

## No Accounting for Tastes

**ALLEGHENY COUNTY**—Last June, after trapping my first bear in this county, I thought I had seen it all. Boy, was I wrong. About a week later I was bombarded with calls about roadkilled deer on the piers of the Fort Duquesne Bridge at the Point in downtown Pittsburgh. It seemed strange, but I investigated and found three deer lying on a piling, 40 feet below the bridge deck and about 20 feet from the water. The only thing I found more perplexing than how they got there was how I was going to get them off. Well, I went home and happened to be watching the news that night when a story appeared about the deer. It turned out the deer had been mounted by a taxidermist and were part of an art exhibit for the Three Rivers Art Show. Don't start thinking I can be easily fooled, however. These deer weren't mounted in the traditional manner; they were made to look like mangled decaying roadkills.—WCO D.E. Hockenberry, Pittsburgh.

## Will Work Smoothly

**VENANGO COUNTY**—I hope our new 800 telephone network, coupled with the fact that we officers can no longer be contacted at our homes, does not discourage sportsmen from reporting problems and violations. The toll free numbers to our regional offices should make contacting an officer easier, not harder. The one problem I see, however, is that callers will be talking not to local officers, but to dispatchers who may not be as familiar with the area. Therefore, please be patient and give the dispatcher as much information as possible.—WCO Leonard Hribar, Seneca.



## A Jewel

**SOMERSET COUNTY**—Last May I stayed at a cabin my father and I started to build in 1949. It sits on ten acres in Mercer County. The tract was being cultivated 40 years ago, but is now almost completely grown over. What used to be a mud hole in a field has become a little swamp, about 20 feet wide and 40 feet long. During my stay I saw herons (three kinds), wood ducks, mallards, frogs, turtles, a snake and many songbirds utilize the little swamp. I visited the area almost daily, and realized that what had been a nuisance for the farmer years ago was now a real joy for me.—WCO Daniel W. Jenkins, Somerset.

## 250 Square Inches

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—Beginning this year, during the regular bear and deer seasons, hunters must wear at least 250 square inches of fluorescent orange on the head, and chest and back combined. This is a change from the previous requirement in which 100 square inches were required on the head, or chest and back combined. Of course, the more orange the better. Have a safe season, wear fluorescent orange.—Trainee Keith A. Falasco.

## No Excuse

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—During one of our classes we listened to a taped interview in which a farmer—from the Midwest—was being questioned about shooting a bald eagle. The man claimed the bird he had shot was a bald-headed chicken hawk. It's hard for me to believe, considering all the publicity it gets, that anybody in this day and age can't recognize our national bird.—Trainee Robert W. Reich.

## Well Prepared

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—With so many subjects being covered in our training, I think it's going to take an entire career just to practice each one once.—Trainee David W. Donachy.



## Humiliating

**ADAMS COUNTY**—Last summer I had to rescue a groundhog that somehow got its head stuck in a chain-link fence. He was fairly upset by the time I worked him free, but I don't know if he was mad at me, himself, or at the remarks made by neighboring animals as they passed by.—WCO Mike Dubaich, Aspers.

## Words of Wisdom

**BLAIR COUNTY**—With the big game seasons just around the corner, now's the time to make sure all your equipment is in good working order. You should also review your "Hunting and Trapping Digest," and be sure to study pages 49 and 50, which provide guidelines for reporting a violation. Finally, remember to treat every firearm as if it's loaded, and be sure of your targets. Have a safe and enjoyable season.—WCO Don Martin, Hollidaysburg.

## It's Toll Free

**POTTER COUNTY**—Finally, after years of complaints about how difficult it has been to get in touch with a Game Commission officer, the agency has implemented the new 800 telephone network. This gives sportsmen and others a direct link to the agency and, through our radio system, we can now receive reports almost immediately. If you need to contact us, use the appropriate new 800 number.—WCO Edward Clark, Austin.



### Illogical

**CLEARFIELD COUNTY**—A woman called me about a woodchuck problem. She told me she had tried to poison them, but was unsuccessful. After explaining that poisoning woodchucks is against the law, I suggested that they be trapped or shot. She didn't like either of those methods, however; she thought they were too cruel.—Don Zimmerman, Drifting.

### Easy Pickin's

Deer in hayfields, rabbits and groundhogs in gardens, mice in granaries, and robins in cherry trees are all examples of how wild animals adapt to man's practices. I recently experienced another example. I was mowing hay when I was literally surrounded by a flock of at least 30 tree swallows. The birds showed no fear, they just swooped around me and the cutter, snatching up the insects I was disturbing.—LMO Ned Weston, West Sunbury.

### Related to Habitat

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—While it sometimes may seem that all the legal bucks are spikes, the fact is that over the past several years spike bucks have accounted for only 16 percent of the buck harvest. That isn't bad at all, considering that the vast majority of the antlered deer taken are only 1½ years old.—Trainee Paul G. Surgent.

### Little Fella

**CAMBRIA COUNTY**—It was not a routine bear complaint. My trap had been set for over a week but there had been no sign of a bear, so I was thinking of pulling it. On the 12th day, however, the landowner reported that a small bear had been caught that morning. It was pouring down rain when WCO Weaver and I went for the bear. Unfortunately, the homeowner had just had a load of firewood delivered, and much of it had fallen on the trap. With the wind, rain and all the firewood to remove, it was a while before we could check the little bear. When we did we found it weighed almost 500 pounds.—WCO Lawrence Olsavsky, Colver.

### Worthwhile Effort

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—Last summer I had an opportunity to attend the North American Hunter Education Championship, held at Fort Indiantown Gap near Harrisburg. I was very impressed with the instruction the 130 competitors received from the NRA, various state and provincial wildlife agencies, and countless volunteers. Sportsmen, do you need a good winter project? Have your club invest a small amount of effort by sponsoring a team for next year's championship.—Trainee Jerry A. Bish.

### Over Anxious

**BRADFORD COUNTY**—I recently heard about a man and his son who went turkey hunting. The man left his vehicle at the bottom of a mountain, and then they took the son's car to the top, so they wouldn't have to climb the mountain after hunting. Well, on their way down the mountain, the father realized he didn't have his keys. He stopped at a farm house and called his wife. She grabbed an extra set of keys and then picked up the two hunters at the farm house. When they got to the father's vehicle, however, they found the window and door wide open, and the motor still running.—WCO Bill Bower, Troy.

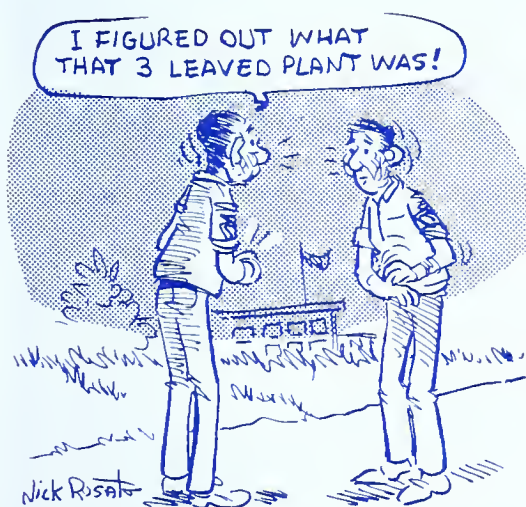


## One Under Par

**WESTMORELAND COUNTY**—When Deputy Ed Farazati responded to a complaint about a hawk attacking golfers by the ninth green at a local golf course he found, sure enough, one very territorial kestrel. The little falcon would swoop at anybody who came near the green. Ed grabbed a fishing net, positioned himself as a target and, after several misses, captured the aggressive bird. The bird was moved to another area, and Ed, who isn't a golfer, was nonetheless pleased with his first birdie.—WCO Dennis L. Neideigh, Greensburg.

## More Comfortable Now

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—I must admit, I had a real phobia about being stranded in water. But after two days of boating and water safety training presented by Fish Commission specialists, I now feel much more at ease around water. The course was excellent, and I recommend it highly for all boaters and outdoor enthusiasts.—Trainee Larry Smith.



## Most Memorable

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—It's unanimous. Out of the more than 100 species of plants we must be able to identify, the one none of us will ever get wrong again is poison ivy.—Trainee Kenneth J. Packard.



## Welcome Home

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—I was fortunate to have my wife's wholehearted support during my ten years as a deputy wildlife conservation officer, and such is still the case. I forgot, however, before reporting to the training school last June, to tell her to refer all Game Commission related calls to the new 800 number. Consequently, when I returned home after my first week, there was a surprise waiting for me. My truck was parked as far away from the house as possible, and it didn't take me long to discover why. My wife Diane had picked up a roadkill during the beginning of the week, and it was still on my deer rack. It's no wonder the neighbors were so glad to see me come home.—Trainee Douglas C. Carney.

## Fancy Figuring

Last year my food and cover crew erected over 200 waterfowl nesting devices in Berks and Schuylkill counties, and over half of them were used. Considering that a goose has 5 to 10 eggs per nest; a mallard, 8 to 12; and a wood duck, 8 to 15, I came up with a conservative average of 7 eggs per nest. Based on a survival rate of 25 to 50 percent, I figure we increased the waterfowl populations by 350 to 700 birds. That's good multiplication no matter how you look at it.—LMO Stephen L. Opet, Tamaqua.

## Lights Out

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—Be reminded: According to the Game and Wildlife Code, spotlighting is not permitted at any time during the regular antlered and antlerless deer seasons.—Trainee Robert W. Norbeck.

## Population Explosion

**MERCER COUNTY**—It's normal for us in this county to get two or three bear sighting reports a year. Last July, however, I heard of over 40 bear sightings in just my district. This should be a banner bear season, even in this county.—WCO John McKellop, Sandy Lake.



## Hurry Up, Guys

**SCHUYLKILL COUNTY**—Deputy Frank Hoffman and I wasted no time setting a trap for a bear that was raiding bee hives. We arrived at the beekeeper's home around 10 p.m. and had everything set by midnight. After dropping Frank off at his home I went to mine, and as soon as I walked in the door my wife said I had caught the bear. I thought she was kidding, but after a quick call I learned the bear had ambled into the trap only 25 minutes after Frank and I had left. I can just imagine the bear standing off in the brush, watching Frank and me prepare the trap, thinking that we must be new at this business.—WCO John Denchak, Gordon.

## Rejuvenating

**YORK COUNTY**—Last July I had the pleasure of helping with the North American Hunter Education Championship at Indiantown Gap. Being a wildlife conservation officer, I unfortunately spend a lot of time dealing with the negative side of outdoor use (or abuse, as I call it). So it was a real pleasure spending time with the young enthusiastic sportsmen, and a refreshing reminder of how our younger generations value the outdoors. Keep up the good work, folks, you make me proud.—WCO G.C. Houghton, Emigsville.

## Doing It Properly

Mineral exploration, such as strip-mining and well drilling, changes the forest and terrain, often to the detriment of wildlife—but not always. Employees of Fairman Drilling Company, DuBois, which has numerous gas wells on SGL 174 in Indiana County, planted thousands of beneficial trees and shrubs around their wells. These 1½-acre sites, interspersed throughout a large forest, will undoubtedly provide excellent wildlife habitat for years to come.—LMO Barry S. Zaffuto, Ebensburg.

## Coming in Bunches

**LUZERNE COUNTY**—Frank Orloski, Mountaintop, told me that his daughter Adeline and her friend Gary Zack were walking on June 25 when they saw a sow bear with six cubs, one of which was noticeably smaller than the other five. I also received a reliable report of another bear with four cubs in the same area.—WCO Robert W. Nolf, Conyngham.

## An Easy One

**SOMERSET COUNTY**—Finally, a roadkilled deer that was easily handled. It happened when Mostoller's refuse truck hit a deer on Route 281. Because the deer wasn't usable, I was more than glad to let them throw in on their truck and dispose of it for me. Thanks, folks. After handling four roadkills the previous day, my back needed a rest.—WCO Clifford E. Guindon, Jr., Boswell.



# Large Illegal Taxidermy Bust

**A**N INVESTIGATION into a sizable illegal taxidermy operation in Allentown continues even though \$8650 in fines have already been collected.

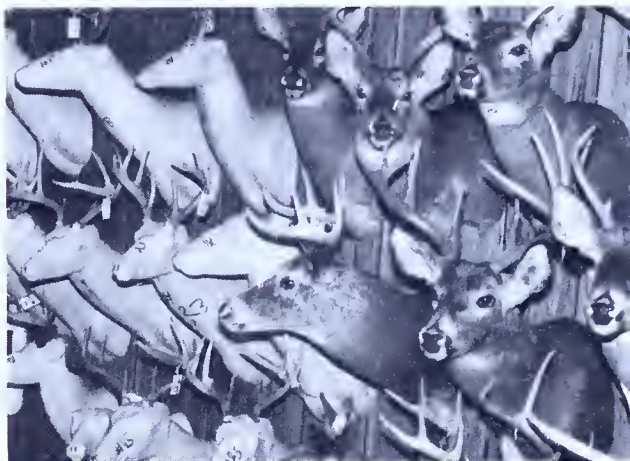
Lehigh County Wildlife Conservation Officer Tim Grenoble, who spearheaded the investigation, has already prosecuted 25 persons in the case, in addition to the unlicensed taxidermist, who specialized in deer head mounts.

Grenoble says records seized during a raid on the Dan Anthony residence indicate he had had 165 customers since 1983, and had been practicing since 1978. Persons must be licensed to practice taxidermy in Pennsylvania.

By cross-checking Anthony's records with the agency's deer harvest records, it was uncovered that of 57 heads found at the taxidermist's, only 27 had been reported to the Game Commission as required by law. Follow-up investigations showed that a number of the deer heads were illegal second or third deer killed in the same year by one individual.

The investigation shows the taxidermist was only involved in mounting big game trophies. He told officers his eyesight was not good enough for fine details involved in mounting fish, birds and other small animals.

In fact, the visual problem was the primary reason for the illegal operation. In checking records, officers found another illegal taxidermy operation about four blocks from Anthony's residence



**WCO TIM GRENOBLE**, Lehigh County, spearheaded the investigation of an illegal taxidermy operation that resulted in the prosecution of 25 individuals.

had been investigated a year earlier, and Anthony inquired at that time about the legal requirements for practicing taxidermy. Officers found among Anthony's records, a letter from the Game Commission outlining legal requirements for taxidermists. A check of agency records shows he never took the test, or even applied to take the test, apparently because of the vision problem.

In discussing the case, Grenoble pointed out that many of the violations would have gone undetected if it hadn't been for the use of the agency's computer as a law enforcement tool.

Thus far, Grenoble has collected \$5100 for the unlawful taxidermy operation, \$3000 for multiple deer kills, \$100 for unlawful possession of a roadkilled deer, and \$450 from hunters who failed to file deer kill report cards. In addition, hunting license privileges of seven persons have been revoked for Game and Wildlife Code violations.

Grenoble was assisted in the investigation by Northampton County Wildlife Conservation Officer Dick Anderson, Philadelphia County Wildlife Conservation Officer Rich Shire, deputy wildlife conservation officers from Lehigh and Northampton Counties, and personnel from the Reading and Harrisburg Game Commission offices.



# 1988 Waterfowl Seasons

**S**EVERE, prolonged drought in mid-America's prairie pothole states and Canadian provinces, which resulted in one of the gloomiest fall flight forecasts on record, has forced the agency to sharply curtail 1988 duck seasons and bag limits.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service expects only about 66 million ducks to migrate across the United States this year. That compares with 74 million in 1987 and the record low 62 million in 1985. Goose migrations should be on par with 1987.

For the past three years seasons and bag limits were designed to reduce duck harvests about 25 percent from the 1955-1985 levels. This year's seasons and limits are designed to reduce the harvest another 25 percent from the 1985-87 level.

Pennsylvania's 1988 duck seasons will be only 30 days long, compared with the 40-day seasons of recent years. The daily duck limit will be three, compared with four last year, and for the first time in about two decades, daily shooting will begin at sunrise, not a half hour before.

Critically depressed populations led the Game Commission to close the 1988 season on pintails, continue the closure on canvasbacks, and shorten the black duck seasons. Under the 1988 federal framework all bonus ducks and special seasons, including teal and scaup, have been eliminated.

In Butler, Crawford, Erie and Mercer counties, however, hunters will be permitted two geese daily with a possession limit of four. That's up from the one goose limit imposed last year.

Seasons are summarized as follows:

Pintails and canvasbacks: no open seasons.

Black ducks: North Zone, October 31 to November 12; Northwest Zone, November 5 to 19; Lake Erie Zone, November 12 to November 26; South Zone, December 3 to 17.

Other ducks: North Zone, October 15 to November 12; Northwest Zone, October 21 to November 19; Lake Erie Zone, October 28 to November 26; South Zone, October 17 to 22 and November 24 to December 17.

Canada, snow and blue geese: North, Northwest and Lake Erie Zones, October 5 to December 13; South Zone, October

17 to December 24; Southeast special 90-day zone (that area east and south of the following boundaries: Interstate 83 from the Maryland line to Harrisburg, I-81 from Harrisburg to Route 443, Route 443 from I-81 to Lehigh, Route 209 from Lehigh to Stroudsburg, I-80 from Stroudsburg to the New Jersey line; also, on and within 25 yards of the Susquehanna River from Harrisburg to Northumberland), October 17 to January 14.

1988 bag limits follow:

Three ducks daily, possession limit of six, but not more than one hen mallard, one black duck, two wood ducks, or two redheads daily; not more than two hen mallards, two black ducks, four wood ducks, or four redheads in possession.

Mergansers—five daily, but only one hooded merganser; possession limit is 10, hooded merganser, two.

Coots—15 daily and a possession limit of 30.

Canada geese—three daily, except in Butler, Crawford, Erie and Mercer counties, where the daily limit is two, and the controlled shooting areas at Pymatuning and Middle Creek, where the limit is one; possession limits are double the daily limits, except at Pymatuning and Middle Creek, where it is one.

Snow and blue geese—three daily (any combination); possession limit is six.

Sea ducks (scoter, eider and oldsquaw)—seven daily, possession limit of 14.

Waterfowl hunters are cautioned that shooting hours shown in the 1988-89 digest of Hunting and Trapping Regulations are one-half hour before sunrise to sunset. As waterfowl hunting isn't permitted until sunrise (see exceptions) it's necessary to add 30 minutes to the beginning shooting hours listed on the table.

Shooting hour exceptions: 8 a.m. until sunset in the Northwest and North Zones on October 5; 9 a.m. until sunset statewide on October 29, except in Lake Erie Zone, where shooting begins at sunrise and ends at sunset; controlled shooting sections of Pymatuning, 9 a.m. until noon on October 29, on other shooting days (Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays) sunrise until noon; controlled shooting areas at Middle Creek, sunrise to 1:30 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.



# ATTENTION, Waterfowl Hunters

Nontoxic steel shot is required to hunt waterfowl in Pennsylvania beginning with the 1988-89 season. The following information is designed to assist you in making the change from lead shot to steel shot.

## KEY POINTS:

- ▶ Many modern shotguns are suitable for use with factory loaded steel shot and properly assembled steel shot reloads. Please consult the shotgun manufacturer if you are concerned about using steel shot in your gun. **NOTE:** *several manufacturers recommend using steel shot no larger than BB (.180") in their guns.*
- ▶ Current steel shot ammunition is very effective for bagging waterfowl, and does **not** cause more cripples than lead shot. Proper load selection is very important. Select a steel shot load with a similar muzzle velocity to the lead load you previously used. Also, to retain desired pellet energy, select a load with steel shot two sizes larger than the lead shot previously used. **EXAMPLE:** Steel 2s have a similar per pellet energy as lead 4s.
- ▶ Steel shot is harder and more nearly round than lead, so deforms less and produces a shorter, smaller diameter shot string which requires more precise pointing, and a more open choke when jump shooting or hunting over decoys. Practice using steel shot on clay targets to develop the skill needed to be proficient with steel shot.

## SHOT SIZE/CHOKE SELECTION

For maximum performance, the following steel shot sizes and choke designs are recommended for waterfowl hunting. Pattern your shotgun with different steel shot sizes and, if possible, use different chokes to determine the most effective shot size/choke combination. Shot sizes and chokes other than those listed below may prove to be a better choice for your gun. **NOTE:** *shot sizes larger than T (.200") are not legal for waterfowl hunting in Pennsylvania.* F shot is .220" and is **not** legal.

| DUCKS  | SHOT SIZE | CHOKE DESIGNATION |
|--|-----------|-------------------|
|  | #6        |                   |
| Shooting small ducks over decoys . . . . .         | (.110")   | Improved Cylinder |
|  | #3        |                   |
| Shooting large ducks over decoys . . . . .         | (.140")   | Improved Cylinder |
|  | #2        |                   |
| Pass shooting large ducks . . . . .                | (.150")   | Full              |
|  |           |                   |
| GEESE  | SHOT SIZE | CHOKE DESIGNATION |
|  | #2        |                   |
| Shooting snow and blue geese over decoys . . . . . | (.150")   | Improved Cylinder |
|  | BB        |                   |
| Shooting Canada geese over decoys . . . . .        | (.180")   | Improved Cylinder |
|  | T         |                   |
| Pass shooting Canada geese . . . . .               | (.200")   | Improved Modified |

**NOTE:** *improved modified chokes are not available from some manufacturers, in which case a modified or full choke should provide acceptable performance.*

For additional information on the use of steel shot, and to receive steel shot pattern targets, contact the **PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION**, Bureau of Information and Education, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17110-9797.

# Record Bear Killed Illegally

A PENNSYLVANIA black bear killed illegally after Christmas last year may have the second largest skull ever measured in North America. The skull, reported to measure  $23\text{-}\frac{3}{16}$  inches under Boone and Crockett Club standards, would be the second biggest ever recorded on the continent. The largest skull, measuring  $23\text{-}\frac{10}{16}$ , was found in San Pete County, Utah, in 1975.

A seven-month investigation by the Pennsylvania Game Commission, the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concluded with a Weirton, West Virginia, man and his two sons paying fines totaling \$3600.

The bear was shot at the Loshi Run Club, off Route 287 near English Center, Lycoming County, about 3 p.m. on December 29. The man and his sons, according to investigating officers, have a cabin on the tract, and they decided to go for a walk. One of the sons was carrying a loaded rifle. They just happened to walk up on the bear, and the son carrying the rifle shot the trophy twice.

Two days later the trio found they

needed a game-checking tag before submitting the trophy to a tannery in West Virginia. They enlisted the aid of a Grant County man, obtained a tag and claimed the bear was killed at Dolly Sods in Grant County on December 31, the last day of West Virginia's bear season.

From skull and hide measurements, the bear is believed to have weighed upwards of 800 pounds. It was eight feet long, and 19 years old. Bears from Grant County seldom exceed 300 pounds in weight, which is what raised suspicions of the conservation officers who launched the investigation.

The man who helped the trio obtain the West Virginia bear tag was fined \$272. The father paid a \$600 fine in West Virginia, and each of the sons paid a \$300 fine in West Virginia. The man and his sons each paid \$800 fines to the Pennsylvania Game Commission for the closed season killing.

There were no tags or marking on the bear, indicating it hadn't been trapped previously by Game Commission employees.

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*(continued from page 2)*

To the fellow who was sitting by the tree within ten feet of our cabin porch, I suggest you review the laws concerning Safety Zones and be advised that even though there's nobody inside at the time, the area around the cabin is still a Safety Zone.

As far as deer hunting on my own property is concerned my desire is as follows:

I wish to hunt without encountering folks who think they have to race me to a stand in the morning.

I wish you fellows would ask me where it's okay to hunt, especially since you know I've already chosen stands for me and my family.

I want to share my property with you during deer season without being forced off stands and having to retreat to the cabin.

With the 1988 season nearly upon us, and following some of the worst experiences I have ever had with hunters, I would like to ask you what you would do if you were in my situation. I intend to do whatever is necessary to ensure enjoyable hunting experiences for my family in the coming years. What should I do? I'd appreciate your comments.

Sincerely,

(Name withheld by the editor; send your comments to GAME NEWS.)



# Lay of the Land

**T**HE WOODS of November look like hunting woods. How different from leafy July. In that lushness, who can imagine where the deer will be? In spare November it's different. The forest feels right and looks right to us then. As hunters we can make sense of it. We scan an early winter landscape and we can see the possibilities of where the deer might be, where they will run. How many times have we said, "I'll try here, it's a gamey-looking spot," and how many times has that strategy worked? We find success not simply by hunting the animal, but hunting the land as well.

In the last few years there's been an explosion of information available to hunters about deer biology, their habits and behavior. It's natural that as white-tail fanatics, we deer hunters are ready to soak up everything we can about our favorite wild animal. But perhaps we're beginning to base our hunting techniques too much on the biological perspective. Maybe we all know too much about primary scrapes and dominant bucks and not enough about how deer relate to land, especially the land we hunt.

It's easy to an armchair hunter, but it takes effort to get out in the woods and see and think for ourselves. If we can't look at the land and decide where the deer might be, we're like the fly fisherman who can identify each mayfly by its Latin name and state its emergence times, yet hasn't got the faintest idea where the fish are in the stream. Understanding the social structure of rutting bucks might be interesting reading, but if we can't read the land, like a good angler reads a river, we've only got something with which to win a trivia game.

I hunt with people who, when you bounce up deer, say "I know where they're going. You two get out ahead and I'll push them to you." Without a word of explanation, we both take off, because

we, too, know where the deer are bound. We don't have ESP, but we all have hunted this particular piece of property long enough and been observant enough that we can predict where the deer will run and where their trails lead.

It's not a foolproof scheme, of course. Nothing in hunting ever is. Sometimes the deer we kick up go in an unexpected direction, and the shooters can only stand there lonesome. But afterward, we go find the location of the other exit route, and try to figure out why the deer went that way. The next time we jump them, one of us will cover one trail, the other the second, increasing our chances. Given the lay of the land, we know, almost as well as the deer, what their options are.

## Look at the Terrain

Look at the terrain you hunt, how it dips and turns, where it's steep or flat, brushy or open, where the woods narrow or widen or change to swamp or field. You can't learn the land well enough to hunt it by just posting on stand. You've got to get around. I like to do "in-season scouting," still-hunting with a purpose. Late fall and winter are not only bare seasons in which it's easier to see the peculiarities of the landscape, they are also seasons in which a hunter can actually see the game ahead of him, as well as its sign and trails. I like to still-

## Another View...

by Linda Steiner



**LOOK AT the terrain you hunt, how it dips and turns, where it's steep or flat, brushy or open, where the woods narrow or widen or change to swamp or field.**

see. I tracked ahead and found the trail flattened out and entered woods that changed from open to full of blowdowns to brush to impenetrable crabapple thicket at the head of the hollow. Curious about where the trail came from, I backtracked and found the path wound from the hillside above my stand, through a narrow wooded funnel that skirted a field and up the next rise into flat open woods, at the edge of which hunters' cars were parked.

Thinking about the land and knowing something about deer as well, the way they'll drop over an edge to escape, the way they like to circle, I could see their ending up in the crabapple thicket put them on the same level and not far from where they started. The wind there was in their favor, too, blowing from the intruders to them.

Knowing the location of the gamey spots where we usually hunt is important, but even more valuable is being able to identify land formations that are attractive to game in any context. That way a hunter can go into a new hunting ground one step ahead. Points of ridges, for instance, always seem to be natural crossroads. I hunted an unfamiliar game lands one archery season and took a stand on top of a small wooded point. Behind me was a long, mowed field. Game needed to cross the point not only to get from one hollow to the next, but also to get around the opening. Each evening I was there I saw deer and either turkey or grouse flocks passing through.

I could give you my list of terrain features I've noticed deer using, and you could probably give me yours. But then, that would make us armchair experts again. With the firearm deer season almost here, it's better for us all if we do some self-study and draw our own conclusions about where, how and why game are using the land we hunt. That way the knowledge will mean more and getting it might just be fun.

hunt out a ridgeline or hike up over the hill or into the valley, then circle around, adding what I've learned to my land knowledge. It's even better when there's snow on the ground. The trick is remembering where you saw all those tracks after the white stuff's gone.

One of my deer hunting spots is on state park land not far from home. The first opening morning I hunted it, I walked out the park trail to a steep hollow and sat down. I had a good view, but not of many deer. It snowed and I got cold, so I continued up the hollow, looked around and took another stand.

### **Wasn't There Long**

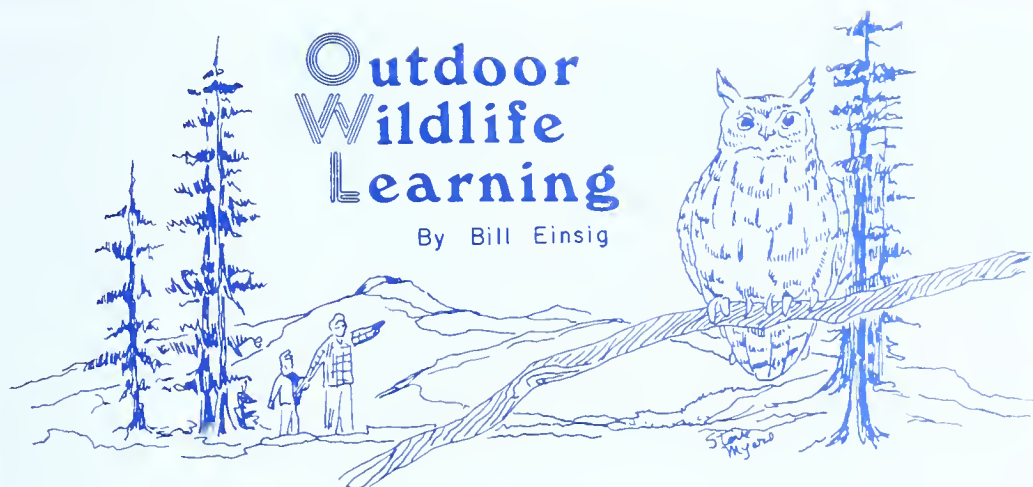
I wasn't there long before deer were cutting down onto the hillside above me, angling up the hollow and disappearing. Not just a stray deer or two, but groups of three, two, five, then a herd of a dozen, including a one-horned spike, which I missed. When I walked over to check for a hit, I discovered the deer had been running several heavily tracked trails on the sidehill, a real deer highway with parallel lanes.

What was there about the terrain here that made them travel it? I had to



# Outdoor Wildlife Learning

By Bill Einsig



## Fancy Figuring

**N**EARLY everyone likes an occasional challenge to brush away the mental cobwebs. So, sharpen your pencil, and your wit, for two problems.

### Turkey Trouble

In 1935 biologists planted 46 Merriam's turkeys—23 hens and 23 gobblers—in a mountainous area of Wyoming. Within five years the group of 23 hens and 23 gobblers produced a flock estimated at 2500 birds. Theoretically, the flock could have been much larger. Calculate the potential flock size using the following assumptions:

1. Introduced turkeys were one-year-old and sexually mature.
2. No turkeys left the area during the five years.
3. No disease, predation or shortage of habitat limited the population.
4. Each hen began to reproduce after her first year and hatched ten eggs each year.
5. Males equaled females in each hatch.
6. All turkeys died during the winter following their fourth clutch (after their fifth year).

A convenient method of keeping the flock in order would be to start with the pre-breeding population, subtract dead and immature birds, if any, to determine the breeding population, breeding pairs, and offspring from the current year's hatch. Finally, add the offspring, breeding population and immature birds to get a year-end total. This will also equal the beginning population for the next year.

1. Pre-breeding population =
2. Subtract five year olds (dead) =
3. Subtract last year's hatch (immatures) =
4. Equals breeding population =
5. Breeding pairs (#4/2) =
6. Hatch (#5 x 10 eggs per clutch) =
7. Add breeding population (#4) =
8. Add last year's hatch (immatures) =
9. Total population =

### I'm Thirsty

Desert bighorn sheep live in dry, sparsely vegetated areas of the Southwest. During the hottest months of summer, ewes and lambs come to waterholes almost daily. Rams, however, may come to water only once each week. These rams may range 20 miles away from the waterhole and then travel 20 miles back again for another drink. Add to this the approximate number of five miles per day during the week away from water and you arrive at a figure of almost 65 miles between drinks! The rams are believed to drink approximately four gallons of water when they do come to the waterhole, while a ewe drinks approximately one gallon and a lamb drinks two pints.

1. How many miles per gallon does a ram get?
2. How much water would a ram need per month (four weeks)?
3. How much water would a ewe drink in a week?
4. How much water would a lamb drink in a week?
5. How much water must be available in a waterhole for ten rams, 16 ewes



and seven lambs for one month?

6. If water evaporates from the water-hole at a rate of ten gallons per day, what rate of inflow would be necessary to provide enough water for this number of sheep?

## Project Wild—Secondary

Both of the preceding exercises were taken from the secondary manual of *Project Wild*—a collection of wildlife learning activities provided by the Pennsylvania Game Commission. The collection is divided into two manuals: one includes lessons for elementary classes, the other for students in middle, junior or senior high schools. There is significant overlap between the two books because many activities are appropriate for students of all ages.

Teachers receive these wildlife education materials, without charge, by attending workshops where Project Wild is explained and a sampling of activities are demonstrated. More elementary teachers have participated in these workshops and, therefore, more elementary manuals have been distributed. In fact, it's easy to think of *Project Wild* only in terms of the elementary school program.

Doing that, however, overlooks 33 activities that appear only in the secondary manual and are really appropriate only for older students. "Turkey Trouble" and "I'm Thirsty" are two examples of these overlooked lessons.

Another unusual feature of the secondary manual is its organization. Instead of being organized around rather vague conceptual themes, as in the elementary book, secondary lessons are grouped according to traditional subject areas: language arts, science, social studies and mathematics. That pattern makes it much easier for a teacher to review and choose activities that correspond to his particular teaching assignment. These activities are

useful in more classes than those of life science courses.

Introduce a teacher you know to *Project Wild*. It's free and they'll thank you for your help in putting these excellent teaching ideas into their hands. For more information about *Project Wild*, contact Bureau of Information and Education, Pennsylvania Game Commission, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.

## Answers

### Turkey Trouble

Total year-end populations for five years should be as follows:

|        |       |
|--------|-------|
| Year 1 | 276   |
| Year 2 | 506   |
| Year 3 | 1886  |
| Year 4 | 4416  |
| Year 5 | 13570 |

A common oversight is to forget that birds hatched in Year #1 will not breed in Year #2 when they are still sexually immature. That's not necessarily true for most eastern turkey which do mate during their first spring. Therefore, the breeding population is just 46 for Years 1 and 2. For the purposes of this activity, Project Wild authors simply assumed hens would not lay a clutch until their second spring.

Actual populations seldom realize such a degree of exponential growth because various factors limit the population's success. Look again at the assumptions. Which are not realistic and would tend to limit population growth in the real world?

### I'm Thirsty

1. 16.25 miles per gallon
2. 16 gallons
3. 7 gallons
4. 14 pints
5. 657 gallons
6. 937 gallons per month

## Volunteerism—Alive and Well

It's always gratifying, and quite humbling, to hear from readers who have already committed huge amounts of personal time and energy on local conservation projects. From my own experience, I've found that those real doers are rarely the ones who get the recognition when awards and plaudits are handed out.

Several months ago this column fo-



cused on helping eastern bluebirds and encouraged readers to get involved for the sake of the birds themselves and also for the students who could benefit so much by working with them. Emil Klanchar, Huntingdon, wrote to tell me of his own efforts to help bluebirds and to make his neighbors aware of the bird's problems.

Emil told me he has used the slide program I recommended from the North American Bluebird Society with senior citizen's groups, scouts, Lions Clubs, garden clubs, bird clubs and church groups. He even appeared on Pittsburgh television for a spot on bluebirds.

In the last nine years Emil has built more than 2000 nesting boxes and erected them in parks, farms and any other suitably open area he could find. That number seems to dwarf what most of us have done, but yet, it shouldn't. Each of us has some contribution to make to the conservation effort and sheer numbers of hours logged, boxes built or awards received should not be the measure of our work.

Perhaps Emil said it all as he closed his letter, "I'm 81 years old and love the work I do!" That's great, Emil and thank you for sharing your work with OWL.

## Bear Check Stations

**B**EFORE ANY BEAR lawfully killed in Pennsylvania may be possessed beyond 24 hours, the Game Law requires that it be taken to a Game Commission check station for examination. Successful hunters are advised that check stations will be in operation at all Game Commission region offices (bold face) from Monday, November 21 through Thursday, November 24. The remaining check stations will be open during the season; November 21-23.

**Northwest Region**—Northeastern Forest Experiment Station, Rts. 6 and 62, near Irvine; Allegheny National Forest Storage Shed, Marienville; SGL 54 (site of former training school), seven miles northwest of Brockway off Rt. 28; **Northwest Region Office, three miles south of Franklin, Rt. 8.**

**Southwest Region**—**Southwest Region Office, 339 W. Main St., Ligonier;** Yellow Creek State Park, off Rt. 422, Indiana County.

**Northcentral Region**—Trout Run, at intersection of Rts. 14 and 15; PGC Storage Building, SGL 208, three miles north of Gaines on Rt. 349; Lantz Corners, intersection of Rts. 219 and 6; Sinnemahoning, intersection of Rts. 872 and 120; Renovo Forestry Building, two miles north of Renovo on Rt. 120; S. G. Elliott State Park, one mile north of I-80 off Rt. 153 at Exit 18; **Northcentral Region Office, two miles south of Jersey Shore on Rt. 44;** at Penn Nursery on Rt. 322 near Potters Mills.



**DANIEL KINGSTON**, Dingmans Ferry, stayed in Pike County and hunted until the final day before dropping this 411-pound bruin.

**Southcentral Region**—**Southcentral Region Office, one mile west of Huntingdon on Rt. 22.**

**Northeast Region Office**—PGC Storage Building two miles southwest of Tobyhanna, Rt. 423; PGC Storage Building, fifteen miles south of Hawley, Rt. 6 at Shohola Falls; **Northeast Region Office, intersection of Rts. 415 and 118, Dallas;** Monroeton Rod & Gun Club, just south of Monroeton off Rt. 220 along Twp. Road T-402 between Kellog and South Branch; Forestry Building, 1.5 miles south of Hillsgrove on Rt. 87.

**Southeast Region**—**Southeast Region Office, seven miles north of Reading, one mile off Rt. 222 on Snyder Road.**



**By Bill Bower**  
Wildlife Conservation Officer  
Bradford County

I WOULD SAY that wildlife officers everywhere, at one time or another, have to deal with lost hunters. Most of the time the hunter comes out of the woods by himself, but sometimes someone must go into the woods and bring the lost hunter out.

The first day of the 1985 buck season had just ended. Deputy Bill Carey and I had been patrolling SGL 12 and 36. We were coming across the top of South Mountain on the old road built by the Civilian Conservation Corps. We had just stopped to check a group of hunters who were finishing packing their gear. It was dark enough that Bill and I had to use our flashlights to check their licenses. Satisfied that everything was okay, Bill and I got in our vehicle and continued on out the road. We had gone about three miles when we observed another vehicle.

No one was around. We stopped and checked the vehicle. It was then that we heard a shot pretty far away. I said to Bill, "Late hunter!"

"Maybe," he said, "Could be a lost hunter!"

By now it was pitch black. The wind had been blowing hard all day. It was also very cold and by now the wind was blowing unmercifully. A person couldn't stay out in it for more than a few minutes. We waited, then heard another shot. "Yeah, he's lost."

I took out my service revolver and answered his shot. Immediately, the hunter

answered. I said to Bill, "I think if we drive out the road we'll be closer to him."

Bill agreed, so we drove out the road a mile or so, got out, and fired a shot. The hunter answered. "Yeah, we're a lot closer. It won't take him long to walk out now."

About every five minutes we got out and fired another signal shot. By now a snow squall had moved in, and the wind was whipping the snow so that it stung our faces. Everytime we would shoot, the man would answer. But he didn't seem to be getting any closer. Bill said, "Maybe he's injured."

"Could be," I replied. By this time he wasn't answering our signal every time. "Sounds like he's running out of ammunition."

Bill said, "Maybe we should walk in and get him."

"Yeah, that's all I need. A lost deputy."

We had been shining a bright spotlight down through the woods, hoping the hunter would see it and follow it out.

Bill said, "I won't go too far. Just keep the light on. I won't let it get out of my sight."

So, down through the woods went Bill. He disappeared from my sight and it seemed he was gone for a long time. I was constantly blowing the horn, but the wind was blowing so hard, I was sure Bill couldn't hear it.

I took out my service revolver and fired. I had an immediate answer. I yelled for Bill, but no answer. I shot again, Bill answered. I kept flashing the light and started to yell for Bill. I could hear him answer. I thought he said he had found him, but I wasn't sure. Pretty soon, I saw the hunter come walking into the light. I took my flashlight and walked out to him. "Where's the deputy?"

"He's bringing my deer!"

Pretty soon, Bill came up over the bank, dragging a deer. I gave him a hand dragging the deer the rest of the way out. The hunter just walked ahead of us out to the road.

"Is he injured?" I asked Bill.

"No, I don't think so."

"Well, why didn't he walk out?"

"He had been dragging the deer. He was too tired to drag it any farther, but he wasn't going to leave it there. When I saw him, he was lying down beside it."

Boy, was I upset. This guy was going to spend the night in the woods. He would have put a lot of people through a lot of trouble and worry. The man did not seem



concerned. He didn't even seem thankful that we had come along.

Bill said, "What are you going to do about the deer?"

"What do you mean?"

"It's not tagged."

It didn't take me long to write out a citation for the untagged deer. I let the hunter know I was upset with his actions. I told him he might not have made it through the night had the deputy not walked in and brought him out. He said he thought he would have been okay.

You might think I would have had a feeling of satisfaction, having brought the hunter out of the woods to safety. But really, the only satisfaction I had that evening was issuing the "lost" hunter the citation for transporting an untagged deer.

The next story is also about lost hunters, but with quite a different switch.

I hadn't left the house on the morning of the first day of the 1978 buck season. The phone rang, but that's not unusual, because the phone is usually jumping off the hook on opening days.

"I left my license at home. What can I do?" asked the caller.

"I would like to go hunting today, but I don't have a license. Can I buy one from you?" asked another.

Most calls are from hunters who did not plan ahead and want us to give them quick solutions to their problems.

The phone rang, "Hello, Game Commission? I would like to report two lost hunters."

"Lost hunters? Already?"

"Yes." Then the caller, a woman, told me the story. It seemed two men had come from down state. They had made arrangements to stay in the farmer's house. She was going to provide them a place to sleep and make all their meals. The hunters had arrived Sunday afternoon and carried all their gear including guns, into their room. They took a ride around the countryside, doing a little scouting. They were back for supper, but after supper they announced they were going out to do some spotlighting. Then they left.

Now, it was Monday morning and they hadn't returned, and the woman was afraid something had happened to them.

"Well, this is a little out of my line. Have you contacted the State Police?"

"No, not yet."

"Well, I'm sure they'll be along."

"I don't know. They were so excited about going hunting. I'm sure they

wouldn't miss it unless something happened."

"Well, if they're not back by noon, give me a call. In the meantime, call the State Police. Maybe they have an accident report on them."

"Okay. Thank you."

Well, the lady called again at noon, but I missed her call.

I was eating a late supper when the lady called again. She was really concerned by now. The State Police had taken the information but couldn't do anything without a call from the family. The lady told me she had called all the local hospitals, but no one had any information about the two men.

"Well, maybe they had met someone and had gone hunting with them," I suggested.

"No, their guns are still in their room and, besides, they paid me in advance. I'm worried. Should I call their families?"

"Well, maybe they got called back home. But on the other hand, if they didn't, you'd be worrying their families."

"I think I will. They've been gone over 24 hours."

"Well, let me know how you make out. In the meantime, I'll have all the deputies on the lookout for their vehicle."

"Okay. I'll let you know what I find out. Thank you."

I said to my wife, "I hope those hunters aren't just partying it up somewhere."

The next morning the lady called again. No, they hadn't returned home. "Now, I'm really worried. I keep thinking they've been in an accident, driven their car over a bank, and no one's found them."

"Well, with all the hunters out on the back roads, I don't think that's happened. Somebody would have found them. Maybe they went to a bar and found some, ah, companions."

"Well, they didn't strike me as that type. They certainly should be back by now."

By Tuesday evening I had the State Police calling. "Well, I don't know. I think maybe we should check the bars."

"Well, we have to do something, said an officer. The families are calling us from down country. They're worried. We've checked the hospitals again, but we've gotten no results."

"Well, maybe they'll show. I put out a call on the Game Commission radio, but no one's seen them."

Wednesday morning, the lady called again, still no hunters.

"Well, I don't know what I can do," I said. "Just wait."

By now, this poor woman was worried sick, "I've been in constant contact with the families down home. They're a wreck also," she said.

Finally, Wednesday evening, the lady called back. The hunters had returned and were ready to go home.

The hunters said their car broke down and that they had to take it to a garage. A

part had to be ordered and it took several days to come in, so they just stayed at a nearby motel. They were not at all pleased that their wives had been called.

I often wondered where those two men spent the three days. I also wondered what they told their wives and whether their wives bought their story about a broken down car. The only thing I don't wonder about is if I'll ever get a lost hunter report any stranger than that one.

## Outstanding Deputy Wildlife Conservation Officers—1987

*The deputies shown, one from each field region, have been recognized for their outstanding contributions to the programs of the Pennsylvania Game Commission during the past year. Their efforts are appreciated.*



Lewis R. Dandrea  
Mercer  
Northwest Region



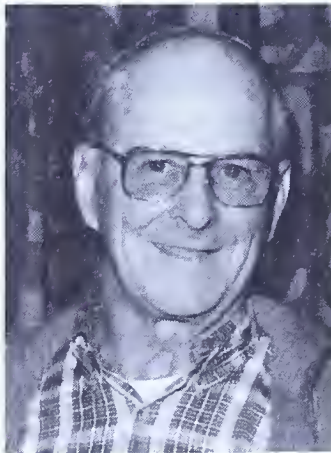
Herman G. Reichley  
Winfield  
Northcentral Region



Jared Wilcox  
Canton  
Northeast Region



Angelo Borne  
Finleyville  
Southwest Region



William E. Hubler  
Port Royal  
Southcentral Region



Lanier H. Schlegel  
Royersford  
Southeast Region



I'D LIKE to share some good books I've read lately. The authors include a retired virologist, a Pulitzer-prize-winning poet, a former President, a teacher of writing, and one of my friends. The books are all nonfiction: essays, memoirs, collections of articles about a raft of different subjects, unified by their focus on nature and the outdoors.

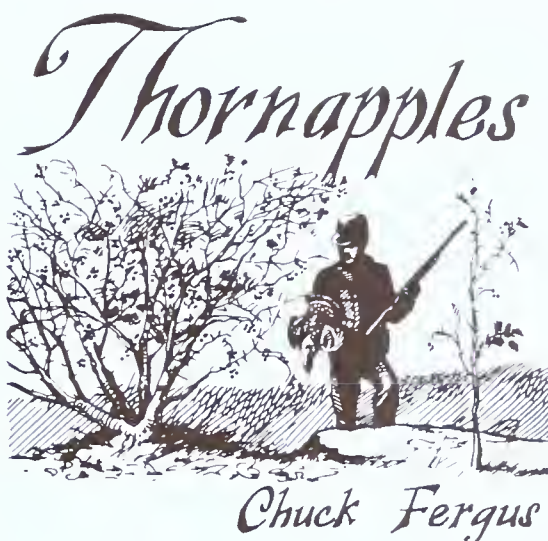
**In Deep: Country Essays**, by Maxine Kumin. Beacon Press, 25 Beacon St., Boston, 180 pages, \$8.95, paperback.

Maxine Kumin won the Pulitzer Prize for poetry in 1976, and her writing talent, I must report, extends to essays as well. She lives on a New Hampshire hillside farm, where she grows vegetables and cuts her own heating wood. Kumin (who has adult children and a white-haired mother) creosotes fenceposts while wearing bib overalls patched with curtain material; she forages for wild mushrooms; and she keeps half a dozen riding horses stabled in her barn. In concise evocative prose she reveals a deep feeling for nature and its cycles—a feeling that, in turn, stimulates and enriches her writing.

As one might expect from a poet, Kumin's images are illuminating, often inventive: "The filly positively shines, like a simonized Jaguar." "Both woodstoves are going, popping their cheeks from time to time." An owl arrives in a butternut tree "like a poem, unannounced."

Her subjects include herons and nuthatches, country kitchens, popple trees and mushrooms ("What does the mushroom know? Only to open the hinges of its gills and shower down its blind spores.") She is at her best when writing about horses—feeding and nurturing them, communicating with them, riding them, trying (not always successfully) to help them bear their young. "Their instinctual responses, their lack of guile, their physical grace, and their intellectual limitations all move and work in me." She adds, "Animals are honest through their inability to lie."

*In Deep* is deep with fine writing. It is



wise, entertaining, informing—a book I'm sure to reread.

**On Watching Birds**, by Lawrence Kilham. Chelsea Green Pub. Co., Chelsea, VT, 206 pages, \$17.95, hardbound.

Lawrence Kilham, a retired virologist, likes nothing better than to carry an aluminum lawn chair out to the edge of a pond or a marsh or into a woodlot to watch birds. He takes notes on what he sees, and he sees a lot; through the years, Kilham has published over 200 papers on bird behavior.

Some of his observations are quite interesting. I did not know, for instance, that blue jays eat sand. Kilham watched them do this repeatedly one winter, "presumably to aid in the digestion of grain, acorns, or other hard winter fare." Nuthatches, Kilham reports, often "sweep out" their homes by brushing blister beetles against the wood of the tree cavities in which they nest. Blister beetles exude a nasty, blister-causing oil; Kilham hypothesizes that the oil deters squirrels from entering and taking over the cavities.

The writing in *On Watching Birds* is uneven. Kilham can be good—as when he likens a snowy egret to "a ballerina always keeping her poise" and says a tricolored heron is "agile as a lightweight boxer"—but sometimes his prose clunks along and would have benefitted from closer editing. Gener-

ally it is enthusiastic and engaging, as befits the personality of its author.

*On Watching Birds* is made the way books ought to be made, printed in an elegant, readable typeface on high-quality paper and beautifully illustrated with pencil drawings by Joan Waltermire. I doubt that the book would appeal to someone not already interested in nature; yet to the beginning or veteran birdwatcher, it should prove instructive and inspiring.

**An Outdoor Journal**, by Jimmy Carter. Bantam Books, New York, 275 pages, \$18.95, hardbound.

I can identify with a fellow who says, "Life is just too short to go quail hunting with the wrong people." I can admire a President who would go up on the roof of the White House to watch migrating geese fly over. I like Jimmy Carter, and I like his book; I voted for the man twice, largely on the strength of his environmental views, which come forth strongly in *An Outdoor Journal*.

The first section of the book is an entertaining memoir about what it was like to grow up in rural Georgia in the

1930s. Jimmy Carter sold boiled peanuts in the town of Plains, near his farm home. He fished for stumpknockers (spotted sunfish), catfish, pickerel, bass, and eels. His daddy, as he affectionately refers to his father, taught him to hunt quail.

Today, Carter portrays himself as an eager, sometimes amateurish, occasionally successful hunter and fisherman. His book contains chapters on trout fishing in places as far-flung as Pennsylvania, Japan, New Zealand, and Switzerland (where, Carter reports ruefully, the license cost him \$70 a day), and on duck, grouse, quail, and turkey hunting. One year while he was in office, he went home to Plains for Christmas, bagged some quail and had them for supper; when he returned to Washington, he said, "I was amazed to find the sidewalk populated with demonstrators protesting my murderous habit." Even if he does not understand urban Americans, Carter has a fine grasp of hunting and fishing and their role in wildlife management; he respects game and fish, and reveres the earth from which they spring.

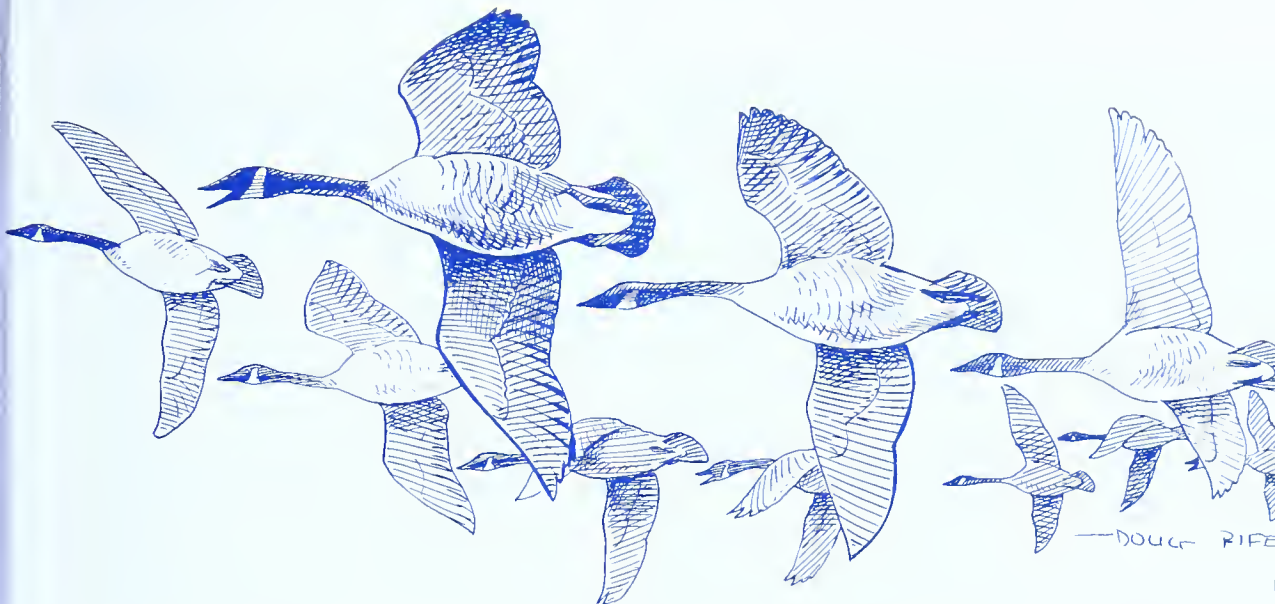
*An Outdoor Journal* is fairly well written, although in places it sounds stilted, almost prim. ("I, however, have found them extremely difficult to hunt successfully.") On the whole, the book is a delight to read. And how could one help but like a former President who, when handed a fishing rod and then asked how big a hooked-but-unseen bluewater gamefish may be, replies, "I don't have any idea, but I know it's a lot bigger than I am."?

**Mountain Time**, by Paul Schullery. Nick Lyons Books, New York, 221 pages, \$17.95, hardbound./Simon & Schuster, New York, \$6.95, paperback.

Writes Paul Schullery in the preface to *Mountain Time*, "Yellowstone was a surprise to me. As a man in my early twenties, after a childhood of steady moving (ten schools in ten years), the last thing I expected to find was a sense of place." But find it Schullery did, as a







ranger at Yellowstone, and his book on America's oldest and most famous national park communicates this sense of place fully: both the physical place, and the life forms and history (human and natural, if we dare make the distinction) that combine to make Yellowstone the wonder that it is.

Today, Paul Schullery is my editor at *Country Journal* magazine. He is tall, softspoken, friendly, often wry, and apparently (and to me somewhat dauntingly) one of the very best writers around.

Consider this passage about the Gardner River: "A home river is that rarest of friends, the one who frequently surprises you with new elements of personality without ever seeming a stranger. The revelations are gifts, not shocks. . . . I seemed always to be discovering new secrets of the river; they weren't really secrets at all, just places waiting for me to become smart enough to notice them." And this segment about a 600-pound grizzly held prisoner in a culvert trap, whom Schullery, sitting on a bucket, watches: "I must stir uneasily, because suddenly the audience is over. From somewhere deep in the cavernous innards of the bear, like a train still far away in a mountain tunnel, a rumbling hum begins. . . . The menace in the sound is palpable, though the actual animal, eyes unblinking, claws at rest on the culvert floor, has not moved at all. I still can't talk to the bear, not even an

'Okay, okay, I'm going,' as I right the bucket, return it to its place by the wall, and with one last wishful look at those incredible eyes, hurry from the building and into the bright morning sun."

*Mountain Time* is often funny. Schullery tells of grumpy elk, quirky tourists, and the rival subspecies of park ranger: naturalists, or "fern fondlers," to which Schullery belonged, and the law enforcement specialists, or "protectives," who "had horses with names like Apache and King. The naturalists' horses, when we had any, were Roger and Jerry. Imagine it. Hi ho, Roger, away!"

If I have a complaint, it is that the middle section of *Mountain Time*, "A Reasonable Illusion," which covers history, politics, and attitudes toward Yellowstone and toward parks and wilderness in general, is a bit slow-going. Yet slow only when compared to the other two sections, "Mountain Lives" (wildlife and geology) and "Mountain Times" (the diverse, sometimes strange people who come together at the park), which are scintillating. All in all, a superb book.

**The Unnatural Enemy**, by Vance Bourjaily. University of Arizona Press, Tucson, 181 pages, \$6.95, paperback.

Complex, well-written, full of self-questioning and doubt, sometimes gloomy, sometimes shining with truth, *The Unnatural Enemy* points up the best

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## **GAME NEWS**

**For a Friend . . .**

that one can encounter in hunting, and the worst.

The book consists of six essays written in the early 1960s, when Bourjaily directed the graduate writing program at the University of Iowa. An avid hunter, Bourjaily writes of opening days (when he generally stayed home, since the fields and marshes were crowded with over-anxious, unskilled guns), of crow hunts, of almost drowning on a December duck hunt on the Iowa River, of shooting geese from pit blinds near Cairo, Illinois (where his companions were sky-busting, hungover businessmen), of seeking pheasants in the corn and weedfields near his home.

The goose hunt, of course, is unmitigated disaster. So are most of the hunts Bourjaily shares with anyone but his Weimaraner, Moon. Bourjaily feels—as any good hunter would—antipathy toward hunting as masculine competition, as blood sport, as business. He writes, “We have conceived, as a significant national view, a genuine, if often frustrated, love for nature and for wildlife, and it is this which, at our best, we take hunting with us.” He says, “None of the moments that hunting offers, when I hunt as I wish to, lacks complexity.”

What I don’t understand is why Bourjaily didn’t simply hunt as he wished

to: shun the lousy hunters and spend his time alone on the marsh midweek (teachers of writing being notorious for keeping their own hours) or pursuing ringnecks with Moon. Nor am I quite convinced by his appraisal of man as “the unnatural enemy.” He writes, “Among the wild creatures, man, with his tottering two-legged stance, his flat face and rudimentary fur, is no more one of the beautiful than he is one of the powerful or the swift.” He adds, “I [never] took myself for anything but a hunter having a hunt—a predator countless centuries removed from his motive, deserving therefore a lower place on any evolutionary scale of predators than crows . . . or shrike or even magpies.”

The essay “In the Fields of Home” is by itself worth the price of the book. Bourjaily’s words about Moon are memorable: “If you bother to hunt with a dog at all, believe what he tells you. Go where he says the bird is, not where you think it ought to be.” And, “Hunters make errors; dogs correct them.” And, “The harmony with which we hunt together when we’re working right is all established for today, though I couldn’t say just when it started being so.” In the fields of home, Bourjaily truly makes the reader feel at home.

The book is marred by an egotistical, wrong-spirited foreword by Edward Abbey, and by some ungainly cartoon illustrations. Still, *The Unnatural Enemy* is worthwhile and provocative. It sorts out and demonstrates a code of ethics which every hunter would do well to ponder.

### **Cover Painting by Ken Laager**

The black bear is probably Pennsylvania’s greatest big game trophy. Compared to whitetails and turkeys (which are now considered big game animals here) black bears are relatively rare. That’s not to say we don’t have a lot of them, though. Last year hunters took 1560 bruins, breaking the previous record harvest of 1549 set in 1984. And if that’s not enough, black bears are being found in areas where they haven’t been known to exist for decades. With continued refinements and improvements in our bear management program, bear hunting opportunities are destined to improve, but they’re actually pretty tough to beat right now.



Extra benefits in . . .

# Taking to the Trees

By Keith C. Schuyler

**S**QUIRREL HUNTING with the bow and arrow carries more than just a special challenge to Pennsylvania archers. It provides extra innings for those who have scored on deer early in October, and it's a means of scouting for the upcoming rifle seasons for those who have not. The same might be said for those who await a chance to use a bonus antlerless deer tag.

Consider that squirrels—along with grouse—come in season on October 15. Consequently, those who take a deer with the bow before that date may hunt for squirrels through November 26. Although it is unlikely that many will brave winter and likely snow to hunt squirrels, there also is the late squirrel season, December 26 through January 21.

Squirrels and deer generally inhabit the same types of habitats. Therefore, you can combine the pleasure of a squirrel hunt with the possibility of locating deer for future reference. In the regular small game season of November, there is the added possibility of shooting at other legal game that might blunder into your squirrel stand.

Those advantages aside, serious archers have a number of important considerations in converting intentions into squirrel stew. All squirrels, whether



**SQUIRREL HUNTING** provides extra innings for those archers who score early in the season, and it's a means of scouting for the upcoming deer seasons for those who have not.

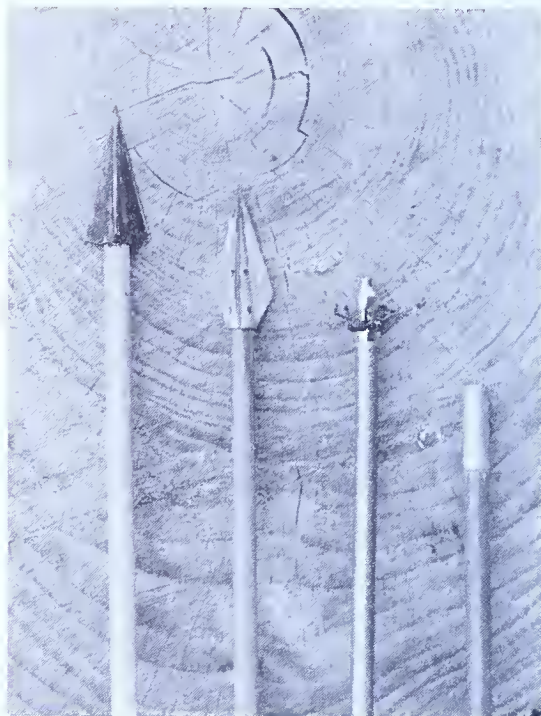
gray, black (the malanistic phase of the gray), red or fox, have one thing in common: They're tough. The red, which is considered part of the legal daily bag of six, is undoubtedly the wariest of the lot and the least desirable because of its small size. Fox squirrels, the largest, are relatively rare compared to the common gray.

Taking a single squirrel is an accomplishment; anything over that number represents an exceptional day with the bow. Numbers aren't important. Equipment is, and so is safety.

Certainly an archer will need properly matched arrows for whatever bow is used. In the fall most archers have their favorite bow set up to shoot big game broadheads. They're by no means too heavy a load for tough squirrels, but using them can obviously get expensive.



**ALTERNATIVES** to regular field points are, left to right, typical small broadhead, Bodkin, Game Tracker Shocker, and regular blunt. Two examples of flu-flu fletching, above, will limit range but still permit killing shots.



Those who know their bow settings for target arrows and points can make a relatively easy change. But they still may not wish to risk expensive shafts and heads on so diminutive a target as a squirrel. The alternative is relatively inexpensive wooden shafts.

There is, however, the cost of arrow heads still to consider. Blunts, or 38 caliber brass, as a substitute, will do a job with a good hit on any small game. Game Tracker's Shocker 5, pictured here, will put a squirrel out of action with its stainless steel blunt tip, and its five spring-loaded claws prevent the arrow from skipping into the unknown. The time-honored Bodkin point or an abbreviated broadhead are also appropriate although each shot may mean a ruined head.

All of these substitutes for the regular field tip will serve well, and you may have some laying around that you wouldn't mind risking for the purpose. If recovered after a shot, a bit of resharpener may be in order, but the condition of such heads for small game is not as critical as for big game.

Regardless of which head and shaft combination selected, practice is necessary to ensure the arrow will fly prop-

erly. All of these heads, from a safety standpoint, mean archers must restrict their shots to squirrels on the ground or close to it, in brush or on tree trunks. Aerial shots are too risky when other people are about.

There is an exception. Flu-flu fletching will limit the flight of an arrow even though it will sustain sufficient speed for the distances at which you can expect to hit a squirrel. The exaggerated fletching causes the arrow to lose momentum quickly, and it can usually be recovered easily, unless it gets caught in branches on its descent. Here again, however, considerable practice is in order so one becomes accustomed to the somewhat different flight characteristics of the flu-flu. Some of the fancier arrow rests on compound bows may not accommodate such fletching, and a warning is in order before attempting to shoot these oversize feather or plastic guidance systems from the more sophisticated rests.

Longbow and recurve bow shooters, who often use the built-in rests, are apt to have fewer problems with flu-flus. Although that veritable bush of fletching tends to make the arrow go a bit left for a right handed shooter, the drift is fairly



**USING THE squirrel for extra bow hunting opportunities can produce some special thrills, and even only one squirrel in the bag adds up to a fair day with the bow.**

consistent and can be compensated for instinctively or by moving the sight.

Those who hunt deer from a stand should have learned enough to know how to go about getting favorable shooting at squirrels. The key is to remain motionless, except for the necessity to draw the bow. Squirrels have fairly keen eyesight, but they have the same difficulty as many other animals when it comes to distinguishing motionless humans from other objects.

It is fairly common to have gray squirrels skitter up and down the tree you are leaning against when deer hunting. It would seem that getting a close shot with the bow should be easy. But the necessity to draw the bow presents almost as much challenge as hitting the target.

A lesson can be taken from successful turkey hunters. They wait until they are hidden from the quarry by a tree trunk or thick bushes and then aim at the spot where the bird is likely to next appear. Homing in on a squirrel, which is usually on the move, will then require a minimum of movement as you wait—and hope—for the creature to hesitate in its search for food. The ideal shots are when the squirrel's head is hidden momentarily under the leaves, when it sits up to munch on what it has found, or when it flattens itself against a tree trunk or fallen timber to consider its next move.

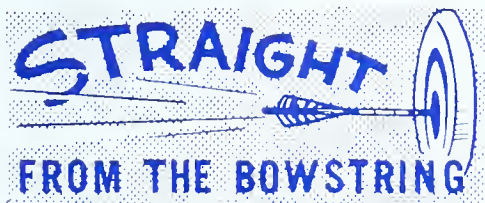
Trying to mosey through the woods in hope of a shot greatly reduces chances. You can cover a lot more territory, but the squirrels you see have probably seen



you first. They are not likely to risk coming close under such circumstances unless you have the patience to wait them out—the same routine followed if a spot is selected for an initial stand. The word *stand* is used advisedly. Those who sit should get plenty of practice shooting from the position before heading to the squirrel woods.

Because there is no telling in advance what distances might be involved in squirrel shooting, the instinctive archer has an advantage over all but the expert sight shooter. Both should have practiced well at close distances. A quart milk carton makes a good target because it closely approximates the size of a squirrel. Just toss it at random and then try to hit it wherever it falls. Those who have no trouble hitting bullseyes at 20 yards may be surprised at the difficulty in hitting the milk carton at 20 feet—without preliminary practice.

I prefer to hunt squirrels in the morning. Although bushytails don't usually





stir until the light is adequate, you can get settled and become just another part of the landscape by that time. You're much more likely to be seen moving to your selected spot in the afternoon and normally have a wait of at least 15 minutes before seeing any squirrel activity. How close one comes at that point depends somewhat on its memory or where it was when you invaded its territory. Large dead or diseased trees frequently contain dens from which the animals emerge to feed and frolic. You

may have scouted the area for a spot to intercept squirrels going to and from obvious feeding grounds.

The classic picture of a squirrel is one sitting high on a branch. But these impulsive feeders spend more time on the ground when they are hungry.

Using the squirrel for extra bow hunting opportunities can produce some special thrills. The need to remain quiet and motionless along a wooded hollow near corn fields or among large oaks leaves you poised for other game that may happen by within bow range. From October 15 to 29, only grouse offer additional shooting. If you opt for a Bodkin head or other small broadhead during the regular small game season, you are legally equipped for a wandering turkey in some counties on some days (consult your Hunting-Trapping Digest) or any other legal small game that comes your way.

But, even one squirrel adds up to a fair day with the bow.

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## *Books in Brief...*

(Order from publisher, not from Game Commission)

**Pennsylvania Sportsman Fish & Game Cookbook**, edited by Kermit and JoAnn Henning, Northwoods Publications, Box 5005, Harrisburg, Pa. 17110, spiral-bound, 122 pp., \$7.95 delivered. The Hennings have long been deeply interested in food available to foragers, hunters and fishermen, and their involvement in these areas has led to this fine collection of recipes from other outdoorsmen. It includes sections on upland game, waterfowl, big game and fish, plus miscellaneous subjects that aren't easily categorized. Anyone who likes to try different ways to prepare game and fish will like this.

**Gun Digest**, 43rd ed., edited by Ken Warner, DBI Books, 4092 Commercial Ave., Northbrook, IL 60062, 480 pp., softbound, \$17.95. Warner has once again proved his wide-ranging interest in the firearms field by assembling dozens of articles on specific, yet complementing, gun subjects. Howard French writes that "Double Rifles Had Glamour," while Paul Matthews tells us about "My Big Little Magnum," Pete Nelson describes his "Mountain Magnum," and in "Of Power and Placement" H.V. Stent argues that magnums aren't necessary. Bob Bell theorizes on "Why Big Scopes Make the Difference" when it's dark, and Dave Petzal poignantly tells us "I Sold All My Lovely Wood" and went to ugly but efficient fiberglass-stocked rifles. Duncan Long writes about the Ruger 22 autoloading pistol's "40 Years in Production" which have made it a shooting legend, and R. L. Wilson analyzes high-grade gun auctions. There's much more, including the regular handloading/gun/scope/ammo reviews by Layne Simpson, Larry Sterett, Dean Grennell, Hal Swiggett, Ed Matunas and J. B. Wood, plus new ones on European guns by Raymond Caranta and security guns by Clay Harvey. Good stuff.





**BEFORE YOU** begin zeroing in your big game rifle, you should understand that there is more to it than just shooting until the bullets are hitting the bullseye.

# How to Sight In a Rifle

**By Don Lewis**

**Photos by Helen Lewis**

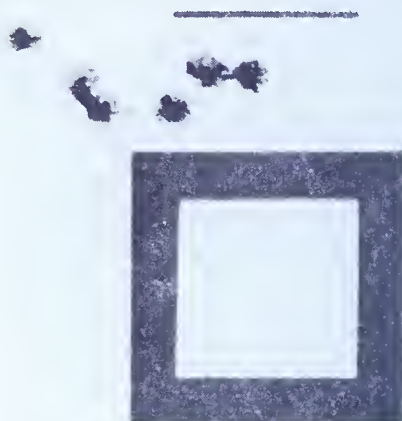
**D**URING THE years I operated a scope mounting/sight-in shop, many experienced hunters would ask me why any hunter would allow someone else to sight in his big game rifle. That's a reasonable question, and maybe there is no logical answer. Yet, these same hunters had their scopes mounted, hot water heaters installed and driveways repaired by other people. When I asked one fellow, who thought it unbelievable any hunter would trust his sight in to me, why he paid someone else to build a cement walk, he promptly told me that he knew nothing about cement or how to finish it. He wanted it done right and he was willing to pay to have it done. I then suggested it might be fair to assume the hunter who doesn't know how to zero in a rifle might feel the same way.

Sighting in a rifle is not a matter of just shooting. That's really the easy part. It's the other aspects that can lead to problems. It's not demeaning to say that many hunters do not have the knowledge or facilities to properly zero their rifles. If all goes well, sighting in is simply a matter of making a few windage and elevation adjustments. When even a simple problem is encountered, however, many hunters don't know what to do. Everything has to be right for the inexperienced shooter to zero in a rifle, and therein lies a hidden problem; inexperienced shooters don't know when everything is right.

I'm not building a case for the local gunsmith; I'm simply relaying what I learned from thousands of rifles that crossed my benchrest. For instance, the most common reason for a scope to



After taking a few shots to determine where the rifle is hitting, right, it's time to make the metering adjustments, left. I prefer to make one adjustment at a time.



reach the limit of its windage adjustment before the bullet is on center is off-center screw holes in the receiver. Mounting some scopes, those with a relatively small range of windage adjustment, on rifles in which the holes in the receiver are off center only a few thousandths of an inch, will often result in a windage problem. I've encountered that problem literally hundreds of times. I could go into more detail on various other mounting problems, but it takes a gunsmith to correct most mounting mistakes.

### Professional Help

While the purpose of this column is to help and encourage hunters to zero their own rifles, don't hesitate to get professional help when problems arise. For example, I recall two hunters who shot nearly three boxes of shells in a futile attempt to sight in a Model 94 Winchester 30-30 that had a 2-7x Redfield attached with a Williams QC side mount. Their problem was that they didn't know the Williams QC side mount has an eccentric bushing in the base that allows for a limited amount of windage adjustment. I ran the windage adjustment on the scope back to center and made most of the adjustment with the eccentric bushing. Then it took only a few clicks of the scope's windage adjustment to put the rifle dead on at 100 yards. I'm not being critical of those

hunters; they just didn't know what the bushing in the base was for.

Before you begin zeroing in your big game rifle, you should understand that there is more to it than just shooting until the bullets are hitting the bullseye. A sight-in session is a learning session. I have been told numerous times that a rifle can be sighted in with just two or three shots, and I have read articles that have gone into detail on how to save ammo when sighting in a rifle. From my point of view, such rhetoric is misleading. I can state unequivocally that few, if any, hunters learn to shoot in the big game woods. The graceful leaps and spins of an Olympic skater are not learned during competition; they are perfected during long hard practice sessions. A violin virtuoso does not learn to place his flying fingers on the center of each note while on concert tour; his fingerboard skill comes after countless hours of practice. Sighting in a rifle is the proper time to improve your shooting skills.

Dry firing is a term most older hunters haven't heard since being dis-





charged from the military. Many beginners aren't familiar with the term, and they don't know its advantages or what it has to do with sighting in a rifle. Dry firing is more than just aiming and pulling the trigger on an empty chamber. It's paramount benefit to the shooter is that it reveals certain mistakes made when releasing the trigger. Generally speaking, these mistakes all fall under the term "flinching." Literally every shooter flinches, but few think they do. Flinching is particularly easy to see when a flintlock shooter has an ignition failure or a shotgunner forgets to take the safe off. There is a noticeable flinch. Flinching, however, is nothing to be ashamed of. It happens to every hunter and shooter. Dry firing helps overcome flinching.

When we fire a big game rifle, recoil can, and mostly does, dominate our thinking. It's hard to put the jarring impact of a centerfire big game cartridge

out of our minds. It destroys our ability to concentrate on the sight picture. We have a tendency to hurry the trigger pull, and that normally leads to a flinch.

When dry firing, be consistent. Keep the rifle square on the sandbags, pull evenly on the trigger, and concentrate on holding a steady sight picture. Do that over and over again. Contrary to popular opinion, dry firing is not hard on the firing pin on a centerfire rifle. Keep dry firing until it becomes routine. The same methods used in dry firing will be used when live ammo is in the chamber.

Before a live firing session begins, check the bore for obstructions, make certain all the ammo is the same brand and bullet weight, and check to see that all screws are tight, both on the scope and mount and in the rifle.

If using a scope, focus the eyepiece by loosening the eyepiece lock ring and turning the eyepiece counterclockwise

## ***GAMEcooking Tips***

### **Company Venison-Stuffed Shells**

Venison is especially well suited to this recipe because we use half pork to attain the flavor combination desired. The pork provides all the moisture necessary and complements the lean venison.

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 pound ground pork
- 1 pound ground venison
- 1 chopped onion
- 2 minced garlic cloves
- 1 10 ounce package frozen chopped spinach, cooked and drained
- 2 cups ricotta cheese
- 3 eggs, beaten
- ½ cup fresh parsley
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 cups grated Jack cheese
- 2 packages jumbo pasta shells, cooked, drained and rinsed
- 1 quart marinara sauce

Saute the meats in the olive oil until they are cooked through and beginning to brown. Add the chopped onion and garlic. Cook until the onion is soft. Remove meat mixture from pan and allow to cool. Combine the spinach, ricotta, eggs, parsley and nutmeg in a large bowl. Add the meat mixture and stir to combine. Add the Parmesan cheese and fold through.

Cook shells to package directions. Rinse and drain well. Fill shells with stuffing mixture and arrange in a greased baking dish. Drizzle marinara sauce over, covering shells, and top with Jack cheese. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 minutes. Serves 6-8.

—FROM WILD GAME COOKERY  
BY CAROL VANCE WARY



**WHEN YOU** know what you can do at a benchrest, there won't be any shooting apprehensions on a deer stand come December.

ing a 30-06. The straighter the shoulder, the more the entire upper body will pivot at the waist. That position allows, more or less, the body to ride with the blow.

You can bore sight bolt action rifles by removing the bolt and aligning the bore on the bullseye and then, without moving the rifle, bringing the scope's reticle to the center of the bullseye. It's quicker, however, with all types of actions, to fire a half-dozen shots at a large target 25 yards away. This will show where the rifle is impacting, and you can make the necessary scope adjustments to bring the bullet into the bullseye. Many gunsmiths use a collimator to align the scope reticle with the bore, but the rifle still has to be fired from a benchrest. Don't bank on the so-called "mechanical sight-in."

Now that you're ready to zero in at 100 yards, use the same shooting stance just described. Snug the butt into the shoulder pocket with the shooting hand, pull down firmly on the forearm, center the reticle on the bullseye and pull evenly on the trigger—just like when dry firing—until the rifle fires. Your bullet should be somewhere on the target. Shoot another shot, using the same sight picture. The second hole should be very close to the first.

Two shots, close together, indicate to me that the rifle is impacting at that point on the target. Now it's time to make the metering adjustments. I normally adjust in one direction at a time, but then I like to shoot. I work with the greater correction first. If the two shots are five inches below and three inches to the left of the center of the bullseye, I make the elevation adjustment first. If my scope meters in  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch increments at 100 yards, I turn the elevation wheel 20 clicks. Theoretically, this should move the point of impact up five inches, but that won't actually be true most of the time. Fire again, and make any fur-

until a quick glance through the scope shows the reticle is hazy and unclear. Then turn the eyepiece clockwise several turns and make a quick check of the reticle. Repeat this procedure until the reticle is sharp and black. When that point is reached, tighten the lock ring against the eyepiece. The scope then should remain focused for you until your visual acuity changes.

I have lost much of my hearing because of shooting without ear protectors and have had my eyes saved several times by shooting glasses. Therefore, I am the voice of experience: Don't take chances; wear both ear protectors and some type of protective glasses.

You must be comfortable at a benchrest. The upper body should be straight with just your upper ribs touching the bench. Your thighs should be level, which will have your lower legs perpendicular to the ground. Most important is that your feet must be flat on the ground. Allow the upper body to relax completely on the seat. I lean into the rifle somewhat when shooting varmint-type rifles, but I keep my upper body straight when shooting rifles with high recoil.

Leaning into a rifle forces the body to absorb all the recoil, which is not a problem with a 222 or 6mm heavy barrel, but it's a horse of a different color with a big game rifle. Absorbing all the recoil is the last thing wanted when fir-



ther adjustments needed to raise or lower the bullet's impact. By now, you should be close to the desired elevation.

Next, turn the windage wheel 12 clicks to the right and fire. Make any needed windage adjustments and fire again. From this point on, it's a matter of fine tuning. Don't be concerned about the number of shells being used; you're gaining valuable experience with your rifle and scope. Furthermore, take your time; you don't want the barrel to overheat, as that may ruin all your efforts. Fire three or four shots and then wait for the barrel to cool. Overheated barrels may cause your point of impact to walk one direction or another. If scope adjustments are made when the barrel is hot, the rifle may not impact at that same point when the barrel cools.

Arrows on the scope's metering wheels indicate which way to turn them to get the point of impact up or down and left or right. I should point out here that not all scopes have distinct clicks. Some have a calibrated scale on the wheel to be used as a reference. With this type, don't go overboard. Turn the wheels a little at a time.

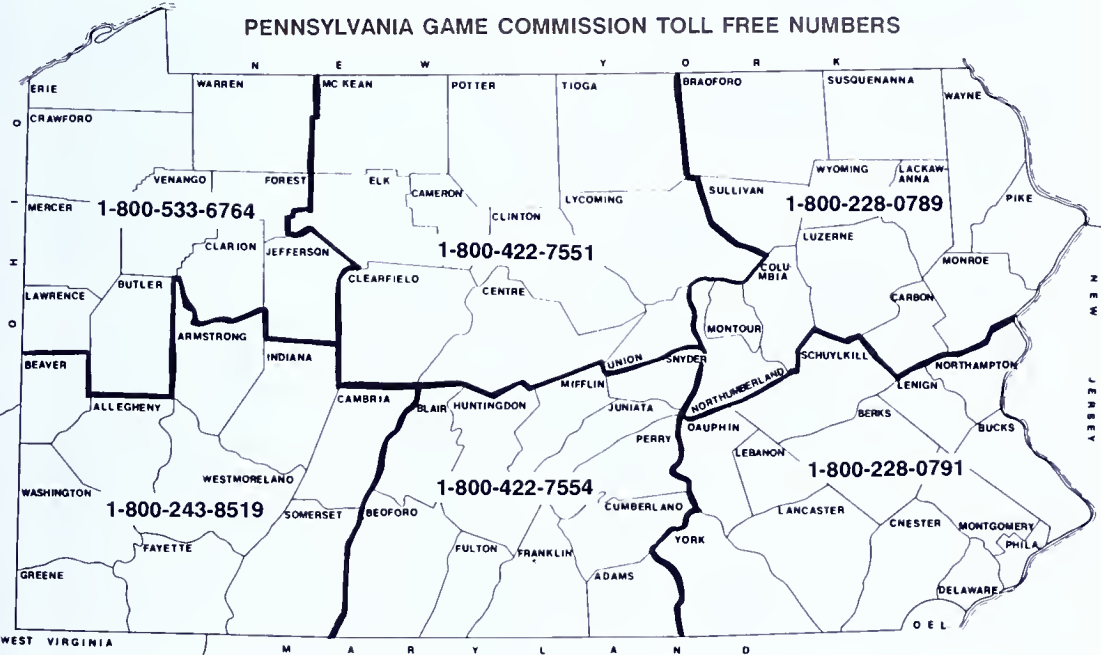
With open metallic sights, move the

rear sight the direction the bullet has to move to get in the bullseye. If the shot is high, lower the rear sight, and so on. If the rear sight is as low as it will go and the rifle is still hitting high, a higher front sight will have to be installed. The front sight has to be moved in the opposite direction from the way the bullet will move to get into the desired aiming point.

You can sight in your rifle; it doesn't have to be done for you. In fact, you will be better off sighting in your big game rifle no matter how many shells you fire. Be patient; it takes some shooting to get acclimated to the rifle. Don't expect one-inch groups. The average big game rifle and ammunition does not have that accuracy potential, and neither do most hunters. Be happy with consistent groups. If you are regularly putting three shots in less than three inches at a 100 yards from a rest, you and your rifle are performing well enough for big game shooting.

Sighting in your big game rifle builds confidence. When you know what you can do at the benchrest, there won't be any shooting apprehensions on a deer stand come December.

**USE THE agency's new toll free (800) numbers to contact a wildlife conservation officer; the officers' home phone numbers are no longer being published. Phones will be manned about 15 hours a day, 24 hours a day during the major hunting seasons.**



# *In the wind*

bob mitchell



The Wyoming Fish and Game Department is requesting a change in federal regulations that would authorize depredation hunts for nuisance grizzly bears, ones that would otherwise be killed by authorities. According to the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee, a nuisance bear is one that causes significant depredation, damage, injury or death, or exhibits aggressive behavior that threatens human safety. The requested change would also apply to Idaho and Montana, but Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks would be exempt.

The U.S. Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals recently—and unanimously—upheld a lower court ruling in which a Wyoming landowner was ordered to remove or modify 28 miles of fence that kept pronghorn antelope from reaching their critical winter range. According to a National Wildlife Federation spokesman, the ruling is the most significant victory for free-roaming wildlife that has ever come from the federal courts.

Following four years of declines, hunting license sales increased in 1987. According to the National Shooting Sports Foundation, 15,819,366 hunting licenses were sold in the United States last year, an increase of 46,000 from 1986. Revenues from the sale of hunting licenses reached an all-time high in 1987, amounting to \$345,282,520. Pennsylvania lost its traditional spot as the number one hunting state to Texas, which sold 1,190,075, compared to Pennsylvania's 1,173,841. Rounding out the top five states in hunting license sales were, respectively, Michigan, New York and Wisconsin.

The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission has developed a state list of endangered and threatened mammals. The Indiana bat, Virginia big-eared bat, panther and northern flying squirrel have been classified as endangered, and the Dismal Swamp Southeastern shrew and Eastern wood rat are considered threatened.

The Mexican government recently enacted legislation that lets state and municipal governments, along with private citizens and groups, become involved in natural resource conservation programs. Called "General Law For Environmental Protection and Ecological Equilibrium," the new law also is designed to prevent environmental problems and encourages the protection of ecosystems and species diversity. Another key provision, as reported by the Wildlife Management Institute, is that the law stipulates that all elementary schools include conservation education in their curricula. The law is expected to have effects throughout North America, particularly with migratory bird populations.

**Since 1987, 48 woodland caribou have been taken from British Columbia and released in Idaho, and another 12 are scheduled to be moved in 1989. The reintroduction project is designed to ultimately establish a self-sustaining herd in the state, where the species is considered endangered.**

The U.S. Forest Service's 1980-85 inventory of their Northeast Region—the New England states and New York—indicates a record volume of timber is growing in each of the seven states, and that forests now account for 72 percent of the region's land area. There's 20 percent more timber than there was a decade ago, and the growing stock volume exceeds 1000 feet per acre in each state. Timber removals average 1.3 percent of inventory, while annual net growth is 2.6 percent.

Conservation officers in Illinois are using modified metal detectors to test nontoxic shot compliance among waterfowlers. When passed over a waterfowl carcass the machine emits a signal if either lead or steel shot is inside. Then, after a flick of a switch, the machine will detect only lead. The device costs about \$400.





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## Outdoor Recreation Maps

To help outdoorsmen discover more of what Pennsylvania has to offer, the Game Commission has produced six "Outdoor Recreation Maps." Each multi-color 24 x 36-inch map covers one of the Commission's field regions. Highlighted are Game Lands, State Forests and Parks, and private lands enrolled in the Commission's public access programs. Also depicted are municipalities, roads, waterways, and — giving the map a three-dimensional appearance — 100-foot contour lines. Maps are printed on Tyvek, a tear-resistant, water-repellent material which will withstand years of hard use. Each regional map costs \$4 delivered, and can be ordered from the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797. If you are not sure of which maps you want, write for a PGC map order form.



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DECEMBER 1988

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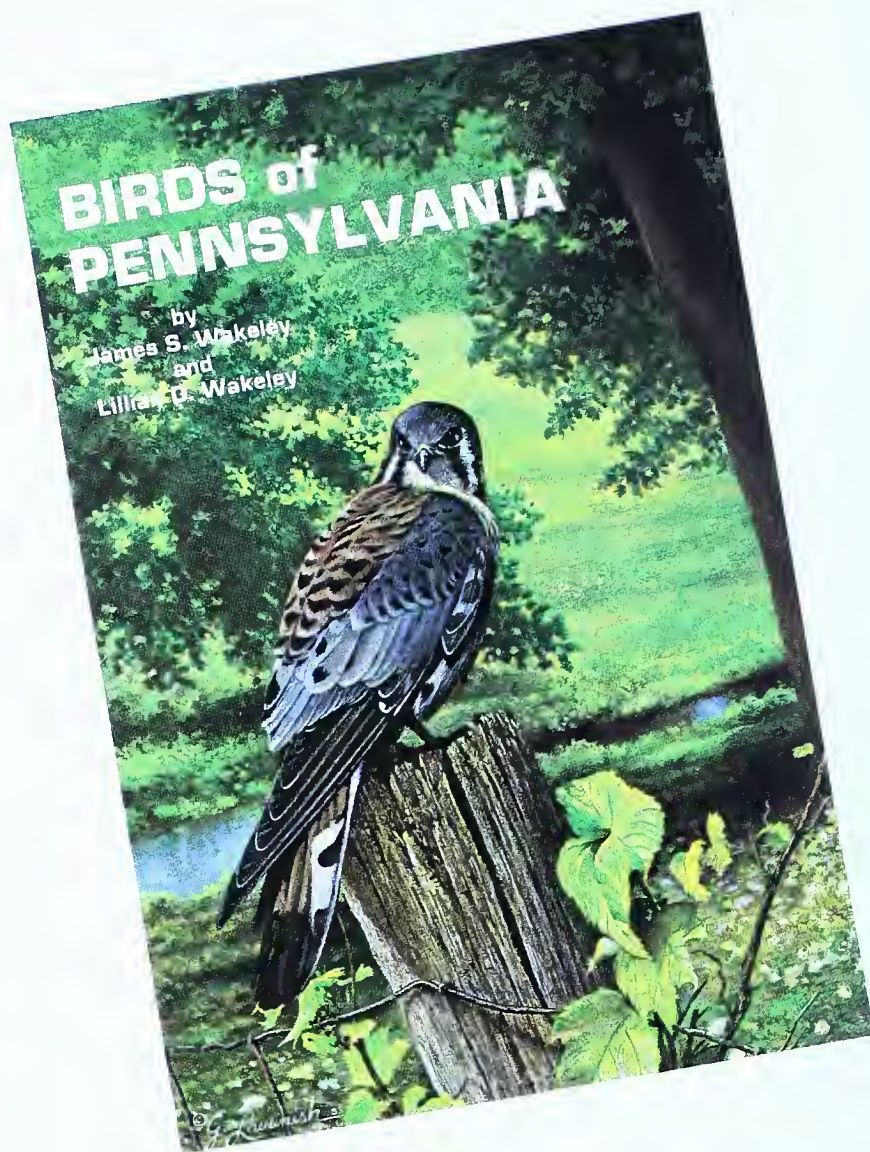
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*Birds of Pennsylvania: Natural History and Conservation*, a completely new book by Jim and Lillian Wakeley, includes the most up-to-date information on bird biology and behavior, and the kinds of birds commonly found in the state, arranged according to the type of habitat where they are most likely to be seen. This 214-page hardcover book, supplemented with 40 full-color pages featuring the Game Commission's popular bird charts and previous GAME NEWS covers, is being sold for \$10, delivered.

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PENNSYLVANIA GAME NEWS (ISSN 0031-451X) is published monthly for \$9.00 per year, \$25.50 for three years, or membership in Pennsylvania's Cooperative Farm-Game Project or Safety Zone Project; to Canada and all other foreign countries, \$10.00 U.S. currency, per year. Published by the Pennsylvania Game Commission, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, Pa. 17110-9797. Phone (717) 787-4250. Second-class postage paid at Harrisburg, Pa. CHANGE OF ADDRESS: POSTMASTER: Send both old and new addresses to Pennsylvania Game Commission. Allow six weeks for processing. Material accepted is subject to our requirements for editing and revising. Author payment covers all rights and title to accepted material, including manuscripts, photographs, drawings and illustrations. No information contained in this magazine may be used for advertising or commercial purposes. Copyright © 1988 by the Pennsylvania Game Commission. All rights reserved.

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## Bigger is Better Syndrome

**L**AST JULY the Pennsylvania House of Representatives passed a resolution calling for the Joint Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to “investigate the financial feasibility and cost savings potential, by eliminating duplicated duties and services, combining the Pennsylvania Game Commission and the Pennsylvania Fish Commission to create a new independent agency to be responsible for managing the fish and wildlife resources of this Commonwealth.”

Such a merger has been studied several times before, often when either agency asks the legislature for a license fee increase. Most recently, just 18 months ago, the State Senate Policy Development and Research Office concluded, in essence, that such a merger should be carefully considered because similar mergers in other states resulted in more bureaucracy and less efficiency, and that it would be imprudent to needlessly jeopardize two natural resource agencies considered among the nation’s finest.

The only valid reasons for combining the Game and Fish Commissions would be to increase efficiency, save money, and improve fish and wildlife management programs.

By merging, some contend, law enforcement efforts would span most of the year, not the peak periods each agency contends with now. That may be true to a limited extent, but only at the expense of hunter-trapper education, Project Wild, watercraft safety, ongoing research studies, and the many other education and public services conservation officers routinely perform.

Saving money? Eighty percent of the operating budgets of the two agencies are used to acquire and manage land, improve public access, conduct research and propagation programs, and enforce the laws. Can significant savings be realized without jeopardizing any or all of those fundamental programs?

As for the fish and wildlife resources—which should be the primary consideration—the hunting and fishing opportunities here are the envy of nearly every other state. Record big game harvests year after year attest to the soundness of our management programs and the health of the game populations. Despite the loss of habitat and many environmental problems affecting our natural resources, every year finds more public grounds and increased hunting, trapping and fishing opportunities. Nowhere else are sportsmen getting a better bargain than what’s offered in Pennsylvania.

Any objective study, as they have in the past, will show each agency to be as effective and cost efficient as possible. Sportsmen and allied conservationists recognizing the fallacy of the “bigger is better” syndrome have consistently lobbied to keep the Game and Fish Commissions separate, and they are this time around, too. It just seems the Game Commission’s, Fish Commission’s and the legislature’s limited resources could be devoted to more worthwhile, productive purposes.

It’s the sportsmen and the resources that stand to lose. Therefore, we strongly urge sportsmen and others to stay informed on this issue, and make their wishes known to appropriate legislators, sportsmen’s club leaders and other interested individuals. —*Bob Mitchell*





THOUGH THEY had gone in a large circle, the deer were now only about 100 yards from where I first saw them. I did not approach the stand of green but backtracked to come up from below it.

## The Big and Small of It

By Paul W. Ochadlick

JANUARY 1, 1988, dawned cold and a bit overcast. When I awoke hunting was on my mind, but so was a problem—should I hunt rabbits or an antlerless deer with my bonus deer tag? I had been lucky to get a nice 6-point on the opening day of archery season, so I really hadn't taken the time to hunt a second deer. What do do? Well, I'll hunt both, I decided.

I took my open choke slug gun, a Harrington and Richardson single shot with open sights. I had an orange insert installed on the front sight, which improved the accuracy and made for better aiming in poor light. I loaded it with a Federal High Power round of No. 6s and went out looking for rabbits. For close work in flushing rabbits from brush piles this combination works fine. I was carrying several rounds of Winchester slugs, which shoot quite accurately in my gun.

I started by walking through a small woodlot on our property and then down a fencerow. I found tracks in the light snow, but no bunnys. I proceeded 200 yards or so down the fencerow when I saw four doe moving to my right, through a field of high grass, and then up a tractor path. I immediately stopped rabbit hunting, changed the shell in the gun from shot to slug, and began to hunt deer.

The whitetails saw me from the first and were moving out of the area, so when they turned to their right and began heading in the direction I had just come from, I ran back down the fencerow to see if they would cross an open path where I could intercept them. They didn't. I waited about five minutes—which seemed like five hours—but never saw them. Where could they have gone, I asked myself.

The field was the kind deer love to



THE SNOWY EGRET is the seventh species in the Game Commission's Working Together for Wildlife program. The program is intended to generate support for nongame animals. This year's snowy egret patch is priced at \$3, delivered. Patches of the bluebird, bobcat, kestrel and elk are still available; those of the osprey and river otter are sold out. Decals (\$1 each) of the first six species are still available, but none of the egret is being made. Order from the Game Commission, Dept. AR, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.

bed in because it has high grass and several hardwood and cedar trees scattered about.

I thought it would be best to track them and at least see where they went, so I went back to where I last saw them and took up the trail. It appeared they had left the path to take cover in the tall grass and cedar trees and then continued straight away from where I was. They were heading for a woodlot across a road. I thought it would be quicker to get up to the woods and pick up the tracks from there. I unloaded my gun and walked down the road. No tracks! Where did they go? I walked up the road, still no tracks. They had to still be back in that ten-acre field. If I was a deer I would have left the area, but maybe because I hadn't pushed them, they thought I was still rabbit hunting.

I took up the tracks again and saw that they hadn't zigged but zagged. Remember, never assume a deer will do what seems natural or correct. The zag took them right past some outbuildings and then down into a stand of evergreens. A little more than an acre and a half, this section of trees, planted 22 years ago, is thick and provides great cover. Though they had gone in a large circle the deer were now only about 100 yards from where I first saw them. I did not approach the stand of green but backtracked to come up from below it. As I was going around and back down the fencerow I was looking into both fields that flanked it and saw six deer in a field on the far side. Were these the same deer I was after? I thought I counted only four originally but there could have been more. It seemed to make sense that they had just circled around me and headed for bigger woods. But wait, they fooled me once, so I thought I would stick with my plan and continue my approach to the evergreens. I had a light breeze in my face as I went slowly up the edge of the trees. The snow was a bit softer now as the air was warming, which made for silent stalking. Walking slowly, I kept an eye on the trees ahead, and when almost at the end, I saw deer moving. One deer stopped in the gloom of the heavy pines.

In one slow fluid motion, I silently cocked the hammer as the gun came to my shoulder. The deer was nervous. Carefully taking aim as the orange foresight came to rest on the dark deer, I squeeze the trigger. There was a flash, a roar and a kick, and deer scattered. But the one I aimed at went down.

I reload, make sure the hammer is safe, and head for the trees. The deer is dead, 35 yards or so into the pines. The shot hit in front of the right shoulder, took the top of the heart off, and came out the left side, about half way back. It was a nice fat doe, and an exciting hunt, ending with a successful stalk. Although it was more like an hour, it seemed like I had left home only 15 minutes ago, because I was concentrating all the time.

I tagged, dressed and dragged the



**IT WAS** warming up a bit, and I hoped the rabbits would be out taking advantage of the fine weather. It wasn't long before a rabbit bucked out and raced off. . . . I missed.

deer home and then hung it up to cool.

What a way to start 1988, I thought. Now, about those rabbits. . . .

I certainly was glad I had selected my H&R, but now, deer hunting out of the way, I grabbed my side by side. I loaded the 28-inch modified and full double with No. 6s and went back out for rabbit. It was warming up a bit, and I hoped the rabbits would be out taking advantage of the fine weather.

I entered some high grass and it wasn't long before a rabbit bucked out and raced off. I fired and missed. Rabbits one — me zero. I circled around and came back to the same area from the direction the rabbit had run. Out bolted another rabbit. This time I didn't miss. Maybe it was the same one.

I hunted awhile and met two friends. We joined forces and put on a rabbit drive. If you have never done this you should try it. It takes at least two hunters but three or four are best. What the three of us did was place one hunter ahead and off to the side while two of us walked close together and straight ahead. Often times rabbits won't sit still, but start moving ahead, never offering a shot. In fact, if you see a lot of rabbit signs but no rabbits, this may be happening to you. As we had no dogs, it was up to us to get the rabbits up and moving.

I saw one ahead but didn't take the



shot, our outside-man got him. Before too long, we got another and missed one using this technique. My friends really liked the way it worked out.

We parted, each of them with one rabbit. I decided to try near the pines, where I had shot the deer just a couple of hours before. I flushed one more rabbit along its edge and got him. Two rabbits were all I wanted so I headed home.

It was a great day both big and small. A deer and two rabbits and four shots fired. It was so exciting and fun to hunt both big and small game on the same day. And it was only January 1.

### Cover Painting by J.M. Roever

December brings visions of trophy whitetails to a million Pennsylvania nimrods. From the farmland woodlots in the south to the big woods country of the north, deer abound throughout this state, thanks largely to sound deer management programs. While deer still thrive in Potter, Tioga and other northern tier counties historically popular among big game hunters, in recent years whitetails have become abundant in more southern counties, too. In fact, it would be difficult to name a place in the state where whitetails aren't doing well. So, if you want to go deer hunting in Pennsylvania, the opportunities are just about everywhere.





*G. Lavanish*



# Charlie Cross—Hunter

By P J Bell

JOHN CROSS was away from home on March 31, 1905, the day Charlie, his eldest son, was born. John was on a log drive that had started at the Rouse place a few miles from Germania. Doc Wilson sent word via log train that baby had arrived and father better hurry. John boarded the first train back to Trout Run, Leidy Township. That's in northwestern Clinton County, a bit above Kettle Creek State Park. When John reached home, a squirrel-size baby, blue as a wetstone, waited a two-and-a-half-pound son.

"Myrtle, you'll never raise that fellow."

That's what Doc Wilson said, but he was wrong. Myrtle kept her son warm by wrapping heated bricks in cloth and tucking them about his tiny form.

"She must have done something right, as I was always healthy," says Charlie Cross. "I grew to five-eight and, most of my life before 40 years, I went around 150 pounds."

## Lived Off the Land

Charlie always worked a living off the land. He was always outdoors, a hunter and a gatherer, fisherman, too. Charlie knows the tricks of the old bucks and bears and where the elk come and lick for salt. He's guided hunters, worked in lumber, been a deputy forest ranger. Charlie Cross knows the land that's sustained him. He's one who's taken and one who's also given in return. Over the years, Charlie and brother George purchased more than 1400 acres in Clinton, County. Today, 703 acres of this is open to public hunting, while the remainder is posted as a wildlife preserve.

"My father was raised on Tamarack," says Charlie. "He was a hunter and that's most of what I know. A double run of typhoid killed him when I was three-and-a-half and George was 11 months. Mother was a Swank. She came from First Fork Valley, about three miles up

First Fork Creek above the George B. Stevenson Dam. She was one of 11 children.

"Mother, George, and I moved down to a small farm on Kettle Creek in the fall of 1913. We raised meat chickens, beef and pork, buckwheat and apples, too. Each year we picked close to 15 bushel of butternuts. That's the fruit of the white walnut tree." Bark from the butternut yields a dye that was commonly used on homespun. During the Civil War, Confederate soldiers gained the nickname "butternut" because of their brown-dyed homespun clothing.

After 1916, there was no store in Leidy Township. Charlie and his brother George drove the horses down to Westport or up to Cross Fork for supplies. They sent the buckwheat by freight to Emporium where it was ground to pancake flour.

"There was lots of work," says Charlie, "but time for play, too. Our favorite pastimes were boxing and fishing. And ball. All boys play ball. We played with a softball made of homemade yarn unraveled from a knitted sock. A piece of rubber shoe in the center gave it bounce."

Charlie left school at 16 and went to work for local farmers. The going rate for field hands was 50 cents a day. Some gave him a dollar.

"Ginseng brought some extra money," says Charlie. The North American species, *Panax quinquefolius*, was common in many mountain areas before 1950. The thick forked roots of the ginseng plant are used medicinally to preserve health and invigorate the system. In addition to its restorative powers, ginseng is visually pleasing, with clusters of small white or greenish flowers.

"When George and I dug ginseng, we got \$16.50 a dry pound," Charlie says. "Usually three pounds of wet made one of dry. The largest ginseng patch I ever dug was three pounds. Mostly we'd get

one to three plants at a site, sometimes less than three-quarters of a pound all day. Like with hunting or fishing, we always got a big kick out of spotting this beautiful plant. We worked together, George and me, dividing any money evenly between us. I figure we made about as much as we would have back on a road job, at 45 cents an hour. Besides, those jobs were hard to come by."

Thinking of this reminded Charlie of one of his trap lines. "It was about 14 miles long, starting at the mouth of Spicewood Run, in case anyone wants to check it out," he says. "It heads down to Sugar Camp Run and on up to Biteman Road. Called Crowley Hollow Road now. From there it went to the head of Honey Run and down to Kettle Creek. Wade the creek down to Owl Hollow and move up to the shed waters of the Huling Branch on Two-Mile Run, then north to the head of Crab Apple Hollow, and down Spicewood Run to the place of beginning.

"I always knew where the big bucks were from seeing tracks and rubbings while out trapping. Used to be, you could trap clear through hunting season and no one would steal your traps." Charlie takes a breather here, maybe for waging a guess as to when folks started changing, or maybe just to sort the order of things.

### **Most Miserable**

"Anyway," he says, "I've always cleaned my game on the trail. Coon, especially, as it's the most miserable thing to carry, barring beaver or bear. I'd carry a coon about a mile up Summerson Run where there was a big yellow birch with a limb that overhung the trail. At that time, we split the hide down the belly. I'd clean the coon and hang the carcass on that limb with a note saying when I made the kill. Years ago, when coons were scarce, most people ate them. I left two on that limb one time with note signed Charlie. Next trip in, the coon were gone. Three fellows from Ohio left a thank-you, saying they'd have a wild meat supper at their club.

"The largest coon I ever trapped

weighed 29 pounds. The biggest wild-cat weighed 28. Because of the closed season, wildcats today reach over 35 pounds. When I caught my first cat, the bounty was two dollars. It raised to six and eight and, by the last, \$15.

"I once caught an old 24-pound tom that was unusually nasty. Not that I ever saw one which wasn't. This tom was in the trap but only by two toes. My dog was with me and he wasn't much on cats, domestic or otherwise. He was a big fella, seventy-five pounds or so. Well, he saw the cat before I did and, by the time I reached them, they were clinched and fur was flying. I got them separated, shoved a forked stick through the trap spring, and slung the whole bundle over my shoulder. We all started out for home, where I was gonna put that cat in a cage. A live cat fetched \$20 to \$25, but there was no bounty or sale worth skinning for.

"Wet ice covered the ground but we were going fine, the dog up ahead. Then the cat gave a sort of throaty growl. Quick as lightning, the dog circled back around me and grabbed the cat, jerking the two toes free. In a second they were clinched again. I tried to stomp on the cat's head, but the dog must have thought I was going for him 'cause he let go and the loose cat grabs me by the boot top. I let heave a mighty kick which set him down without a place to go.

"His closest getaway from the dog was up my back. So up he went. I tried to swing around real quick and knock him off against a nearby hemlock, but I lost balance and went down. The dog nailed the tom, and they were clinched again, growlin' and yowlin'. I grabbed up the forked stick and really whacked the tom's head. He dropped, one eye red as a cherry. I thought he was dead and was looking for a place to throw him away when he started to stretch and growl.

"My best bet was to reset the trap real quick and spring it on him. I did, and caught that cat by a front paw. I took him on home and caged him. Come next morning, he was good and alive and even nastier. I traded him to a friend for finishing up a gunstock for me."





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Charlie saw his first possum in 1928. "Of course, I thought it badly hurt," he says. "It being my first and all, I didn't know better. I laid it up on the bank, still in the trap, and went on about my business. That possum was gone when I got back, a sin I'll no doubt have to answer for.

Charlie's family all were hunters, the grandfather and his three boys. Charlie remembers a hunting party back in 1910 or 1911 that took an exceptionally large buck, so large, in fact, they brought it to his granddad's place by ox and stoneboat.

"Uncle Charlie was good on grouse. He had a Stevens double barrel, 30-inch full choke, with two inches off the end. He'd use number 4 shot, and always hunted with his English setter, Bell. As the story was told to me," says our Charlie, "a man from Winchester got wind of Uncle Charlie and made arrangements for a hunt. He came with three nice double barrel shotguns and two pump Model 97s. I think there was some kind of a bet, but I don't know the details. Uncle and the man each picked a judge

and the two judges picked a third. Story goes that straws were drawn and Uncle pulled first shot. My guess is that they hunted Paddy's Run, which is a frost belt all but three months of the year. Anyway, when the hunt was done, Uncle still had his gun."

Charlie's hunted small game all his life, at least all of it after the first 12 years. He likes squirrel hunting with a good dog and a good 22, preferably the Marlin 39.

"I've got no secret for hunting success," Charlie says. "A lot of it is luck, but I believe in staying quiet. Do more looking than walking. I've killed most of my deer across the hollows and many in their nests.

### Funniest Hunts

"No doubt the funniest of my hunts was the 200-pound bear down on Two-Mile Run. I was standing on a fallen white pine that projected out over the water. It measured at least three feet in diameter—about 800 board feet right there. The red brush was so thick I couldn't see the ground across the hol-

low. Delbert Schoonover was driving, and I could hear an animal moving ahead of him. The critter would wait till Delbert got within a hundred feet, then it would move on and stop again.

"Eventually, it cut back and got on my side of Huling Branch. It was moving like a smart old buck, so I paid little mind until it got within 75 feet, coming from my side. As the bear took airborne over the run, I got off a single shot. Hit the front shoulder. The critter hung in mid-air and then dropped out of sight in the stream for close on 100 yards. Then in no time, I hear it coming back. I can't see for the red brush and fiddle ferns. Nothing. The next I know, it's coming toward the white pine where I'm standing. I was sure there wasn't room enough for both of us. I shot again as its front paws met the log. The bear went down once again, but continued toward me below the log. As it got right to where I was standing, I took the rifle in my right hand, the barrel only three feet from the bear, and shot down between the front shoulders. No movement after that.

"The first two hits had been along the neck, one on each shoulder. I was firing a Model 54 Winchester 30-06 with a 24-

inch barrel, using Remington 220-grain hollow points."

Hunting isn't Charlie's only experience with bear. He's even mustered up a few hands-on encounters. Not that he'll suggest this is anything terribly special.

"I've taken a number of bear from traps throughout the years," says Charlie. "They can be plenty funny sometimes. Sure, they stand with their neck up and pop their teeth so it sounds like two stones being bumped together, but that's just to warn you away. Talk to the animal in a low, gentle voice. He'll calm some. Work your way in close, remove your trapping glove, and put it on a stick about two feet long. Pet the bear about the neck and ears with it. When he puts his ears up and lowers the hair, you can very carefully let him free from the trap."

Charlie's fished as far north as upper Ontario and hunted as far west as Montana. He says these are all very nice places with very nice people, but he feels kinda lonesome after about two weeks. "I get the urge to get home to Pennsylvania," he says. "There's something about the area that makes me like remembering where George and I saw the bear and the cubs, the whitetail and the fawns. I like remembering how the birds sing and the sport we had hunting crows when we got our first calls. It didn't take long for those old black fellows to wise up, but we had fun till they did. When winter's here and the mercury hardly ever gets as high as 10 degrees, I sit at the window and think about the days when we cut logs for \$1.50 per 1000 board feet, even in deep snow.

**"GINSENG brought some extra money," says Charlie. "Its thick forked roots are used medicinally to preserve health and invigorate the system. We got \$16.50 a dry pound."**

"George and I always liked hunting. As kids we hardly slept for two nights before season opener. We had many good hunts over the years. I remember one where we left the house just at daylight, getting nearly to Owl Hollow be-





fore sighting a large deer track. It was about four miles from home. Snow had fallen during the night. Well, George moved out to my right about 50 yards. We'd gone ahead only a quarter-mile when I jumped several deer. They ran right at George, who emptied his 54 Winchester 30-06 and never touched one. He was bound to go after them, but I played stubborn and said no. 'There's no point to going on,' I said.

"After a good hot brothers' argument, we separated. George took chase and headed toward Kettle Creek. He'd been gone about a half-hour when I heard him shoot. I was nearly to Hevner's Run by then. Nothing followed to signal he'd connected, so I hunted the Run all day, occasionally hearing shots from his direction.

"About 2:30, I started for home, stopping for a short sit at the top of the big hill. I'd just gotten up to head out again when I heard a drive coming. I waited till it had gone on, then started. Not many yards farther and out of nowhere comes this big buck. I was carrying a new Model 54 Winchester. Unlike my old one, which I'd carried a number of years, the safety on this gun turned toward the bolt to fire. Well, I got confused and tried shooting with the safety on but wised up real quick. The first shot that took off hit him square in the heart. The second hit the neck in back of his ears just as he got going on a very steep hill. Down and over he went, rolling about 50 yards.

"Like most hunters in those days, I had a rawhide boot lacing in my pocket. I hustled on down the hill and got him hooked up. Then I started pulling. It was a real climb. Finally I had him to within 10 feet of the top. I was getting ready to feel real pleased when the lacer broke. He tumbled back down, even lower than the first time. So I tried again, and it all worked out. I was kinda tired by then, so I dressed him and went looking for help.

"George was going through the gate as I got to our fields. When I caught up, he was just as mad or maybe worse than he'd been in the morning. 'If you'd a

gone along, we'd a got the big buck. I chased it,' he said, 'and it went into a drive and they got it.'

"Was it right at the head of Ox Hollow, just on top of the hill on that big bench?"

"Yeah."

"How big was he?"

"The biggest I've ever seen," George said.

"How big were the antlers?"

"Like a rocking chair base."

"Don't fret so," I said. 'He's layin' right back there where I killed him.'

"The buck wasn't quite so big as George thought, but big enough. The spread was about 22 inches, with 8 points, each about eight inches in length. We went to drag him out that night. As it happens, George had been only about 150 yards away when I shot the buck. But in those days, the red brush was so thick, you couldn't see 70 yards in that area.

### Over the Years

"Over the years, George and I bought a bit of land, somewhere over a thousand acres. Most of it came from tax sales we bid on, some from individuals. We first saw the ground when it was covered by stumps left from the lumbermen. Any trees that remained were no taller than the stumps. I was a foreman with the CCC at Hammersley Camp then, and when we got in the truck to head for work, the boys could see deer on bare ground. Today, you can hardly see ground. Trees that were no more than four feet in height have grown so that some saw logs could be harvested now."

We take a walk outside and four deer bounce on up the mountain from the feeder. "Seems funny," he says. "When I started hunting deer, I'd have to go at least a mile farther to even see a track. Still, I haven't heard a whippoorwill for, I bet, three years. We settled here in 1913, and you could hear about 15 hollering all at once. When fall came, there'd be so many in the sky—all mixed with bullbats among them—they couldn't be counted."

I ask how other things have changed, and he tells me Clinton County had lots of native elk until 1923 or '24. "They were in the Summerson Branch of Trout Run on to the shedwaters of the Bell Branch of the Hammersley," he says. "The Elk Horn Branch of the Hammersley was so named because Jacob Hammersley hung a rack of antlers at its mouth. Jake, who was my great-great-grandfather, killed three elk in one day on the second branch of Kettle Creek, later called Cross Fork Branch. Not far from there is a natural salt lick where the elk gather.

"Through 1926, there were still plenty of elk. I was mowing fire lanes for the Forestry Department then. The fiddle ferns were two to three feet high, almost as tall as the trees, which were so small you could look over their tops. From Route 144, the old Coudersport Pike, down all branches of Young Woman's Creek, there were more elk than deer."

Charlie gazes off in the distance, remembering. "Most of what was taught to me about hunting, I owe to Albert Calhoun and his boys," he says. "Albert was the fellow I respected just about most of all when I was young. He took me on my first successful deer hunt, in 1924. I'd hunted them for six years without seeing a buck.

"First off, I'd been sick with the quizzies so bad I'd eaten nothing but bread and milk for four days straight. I was weak with fever and had just crawled out of bed when Albert came along. He was a kind fellow and large, about six-three, 200 pounds. I told him flat out I couldn't make it, but Albert was persistent. Eventually he won his way although my mother didn't want me to go.

"We went up Spicewood Run about a mile and took a point between two hollows. I'd rested often by the time we got up where the first hollow leveled off. We looked across the next one for I'd say 20 minutes. Don't you know that old fellow was just thinking of a way to get me across and up the other side to where that one leveled. Soon he said, 'Charlie, see that big white rock just under the top of that hill? There's a bear hole under there.'

"Well, I could see the end of the rock was about a foot above the ground, but I saw no sign of any activity.

"If there's a bear over there, we'll get him,' Albert said. After a bit of sitting and looking he said, 'You know, I saw something move inside the hole. Go on over and take a look.'

"It was 300 yards across the hollow. I got over there in the vicinity of the white rock only after many stops. Both Albert and I knew I could take a bear if one came out. I had a Krag rifle, 30-40 caliber or 30 USA, with a 30-inch barrel. I'd purchased it from the NRA for less than \$10. Finally realizing that no bear was coming, I hollered, 'I'm going home!'

"Albert hollered back and, after much long range shouting, I waited for him to join me. He was carrying a very well worn 94 Winchester with a 26-inch octagon barrel. Standing under the top of that mountain, he said, 'Only 20 yards to go. You move straight above us and back about 300 feet. Get on the big rock. I'll make a drive for you.' He left and I went up and sat on that rock about an hour. Now I was tired and weak. Albert's grandson was with me. He was 10 and tired too.

"We'd best head home,' I said even-

## Thoughts While Walking

*The custom of saying grace at meals had, probably, its origin in the early times of the world, and the hunter-state of man, when dinners were precarious, and a full meal was something more than a common blessing!*

— Charles Lamb





**CHARLIE CROSS** had a string of 72 consecutive deer kills, all but a half dozen or so being bucks. Over the same span he took 12 bears and trapped over 70 bobcats.

tually. 'Albert's gone down Two-Mile Run. He won't be back till after dark.'

"So we slid off the rock. Just then, two of the biggest buck I'd ever seen—alive or dead—tore past at 50 yards, the red brush really cracking. The bolt had worked up on my rifle and, when I pulled the trigger, the bolt flew down but she didn't shoot.

"We stood about 100 yards from the edge of the hill where we could look across Spicewood Run and hear them charging up the other side. Finally, the boy saw them through the red brush. They'd gotten to where it wasn't so thick and I could see. I shot. They stopped. I shot again. They never even moved. They stood, one square above the other, the top one's belly even with the lower one's back. I knew I'd shot under. I placed the third shot toward the upper buck. The lower one went down.

"Then came the loudest yell I'd ever heard old Albert holler. 'Give 'er to 'em! Don't let him get away!'

"When he reached us, he wanted to know if I'd made a hit. 'That's a long ways over there,' he said.

"I saw him roll down the hill against a tree, all four legs sticking up above a log,' I told him. I had Remington Bronze Point, high speed bullets, real killers. I knew that buck was dead."

That was Charlie Cross's first deer, but not his last. As it turns out, it was the first of 72 consecutive Pennsylvania deer kills for Charlie, all but a half-dozen or so being bucks. His most recent kill was in 1986, when he took a big spike near his Spice Wood Run camp in Leidy Township. The shot was made at 300 yards with his scope-sighted 270 Winchester. Two of his trophies were 14-pointers, and one 10-point weighed 200 pounds. In the same period, Charlie took 12 bears and trapped over 70 bobcats.

In 1987, for the first time since this 83-year-old hunter was a boy, Charlie could not get into the woods in deer season. When it opened, he had just left Geisinger Hospital in Danville, after treatment for Lyme disease. At this writing he is recovering well and expects to be back out there this season, eager to start another string.

# A Friend in Pennsylvania

By Copley H. Smoak

THE DAY before deer season was most unseasonable. A bright sun bathed the little town of Brownsville, giving us some unusual shirt sleeve weather. After picking up a friend and exchanging amenities with his folks, we gassed up the old motor home and headed southeast. Having one Pennsylvanian aboard separated us from those out of state hunters, we thought. Being from Maryland is probably bad enough, but I'm from that South Carolina red land between the Broad and Saluda Rivers, and my accent still gives me away, despite the fact I've lived in the shadow of the Mason-Dixon line for some time. Most of us displaced Rebels quit fighting the Civil War, even though we may yet refer to it as the War of Northern Aggression.

## Our Game

Bedford County was our destination. Deer hunting was our game.

Gray clouds loomed over the mountains. "Here comes the rain," hissed Richard. Strong wind buffeted the vehicle as we started to climb. The motor began to run rough. About three-fourths up Black Mountain the engine started to die. It sputtered, backfired, coughed and quit, rolling to a stop on the shoulder.

Terry, a good mechanic, popped back the engine cover and discovered the distributor cap had cracked in half. "Without a distributor cap we're going no where," he announced disgustedly. Here we are, broken down in a cold rain storm in rural Pennsylvania on Sunday night.

"There's nothing like being broken down, with nothing open, in the middle of no where," exclaimed Richard.

I countered, "Well, we are somewhere because I see a light up there on

that hill." So I put on my heavy coat and sloshed up a muddy road towards the light, hoping for a phone or something, but dire thoughts did enter my mind.

Knocking on the door, I half expected to see a shotgun first. Instead a stout lady in a shawl peered down as the door creaked slightly open. She called for her husband and he invited me into the kitchen. It was warm and dry, with a homey smell. After I described our plight he placed a black rotary phone in his lap, put on his half lens and dialed a number.

"John, got a fellow over here that needs a distributor cap for a Dodge 318 with regular ignition. You think you might. Okay." He hung up and said to me, "He's eating supper right now. He'll go to his shop when he finishes. He thinks he might have one. John works on about everything around here, from lawn mowers to tractors, don't you know? And I reckon there ain't nothing open tonight this side of Pittsburgh." I got the picture, vividly.

I thanked him profusely and trudged back down to the sick vehicle with the sick occupants. When I told them the news it didn't seem to cheer them up very much. We sat in the quiet cold, the rain blowing in sheets, reflecting across the windshield by the headlights of the occasional passing travelers.

Bright lights suddenly appeared out front. I went out to greet the arrival. A diminutive man with a pleasant face was pulling on his overall jacket as he stepped down from the elevated seat of a vintage truck. I held the door as he entered the motor home.

"You fellows picked a bad night to breakdown," he chuckled as he pulled from his pocket an orange distributor cap. Terry's face lit up like a Christmas





**STRONG WIND** buffeted the vehicle as we started to climb. Then the motor began to run rough. About three-fourths up the mountain the engine started to die.

tree. It looked like the right one. He transferred the spark plug wires, snapped it into place and told Gene to give it a crank. The engine started with a roar. All smiles. I asked the wonderful little man what we owed him — and held my breath.

"Five dollars will be about right," he responded.

Not believing my ears I repeated, "Five Dollars?"

He replied, "I know the part is used, but I get a little extra for delivery."

Oh yes, I had seen that slogan on license plates. But it had never really sunk in. Now, I know full well what it means when it says, **YOU HAVE A FRIEND IN PENNSYLVANIA.**

**IN RECOGNITION** of his 25 years of penning "Straight from the Bowstring" for **GAME NEWS**, and for the outstanding professional standards he has set for outdoor writing, Keith Schuyler, right, was presented a Conservation Edition print of this year's Working Together for Wildlife print. Northeast Region I & E Supervisor Ed Sherlinski made the presentation at the fall meeting of the Pennsylvania Outdoor Writers Association.

Don Carey









# A Whole New Ball Game

By Diana S. Berger

IT WAS OUT of sheer necessity that I bought a muzzleloader license. Sure, I had shot the gun several times, and Dad hunted enthusiastically with the flintlock every year, but I never would have considered trading in my trusty '06 for anything else if it hadn't come down to a choice between hunting with the flintlock or not hunting at all. Doe season fell during finals week, and I couldn't be home from college for much of buck, either. The muzzleloading season, on the other hand, conveniently fell over Christmas break, and Dad just happened to have an extra rifle. No problem. I figured it would take me a day or two to get a deer and that I'd use the rest of my vacation to sleep in.

When the season entered its second week I was exhausted. I also had had a couple inches snipped off my shirttail, and I developed a whole new outlook on the art of hunting. The three of us got out of the pickup at the bottom of the icy hill road, and there was a quiet moment as we all primed our rifles. Then we separated, Dad heading up one hollow, Tom another, and me slipping and sliding up the logging road. I had to watch my footing and both hillsides at the same time, while holding the heavy TCA awkwardly, to keep the lock under my arm, sheltered from the light snowfall.

There was not the regular-season bevy of hunters in the woods to stir up the deer and run them to the watchers. The deer were now back to their natural feeding patterns, and it was up to the hunter to figure them out. Furthermore, just seeing a deer isn't enough. It had to offer a pretty good shot because a round ball is not like today's modern bullets. Of course, none of this matters if, for any of dozens of reasons, your rifle doesn't go off.

I was confident. I had a reliable rifle and knew I could hit what I was aiming

for. Those horror stories about misfires, of deer running after being hit . . . couldn't happen to me.

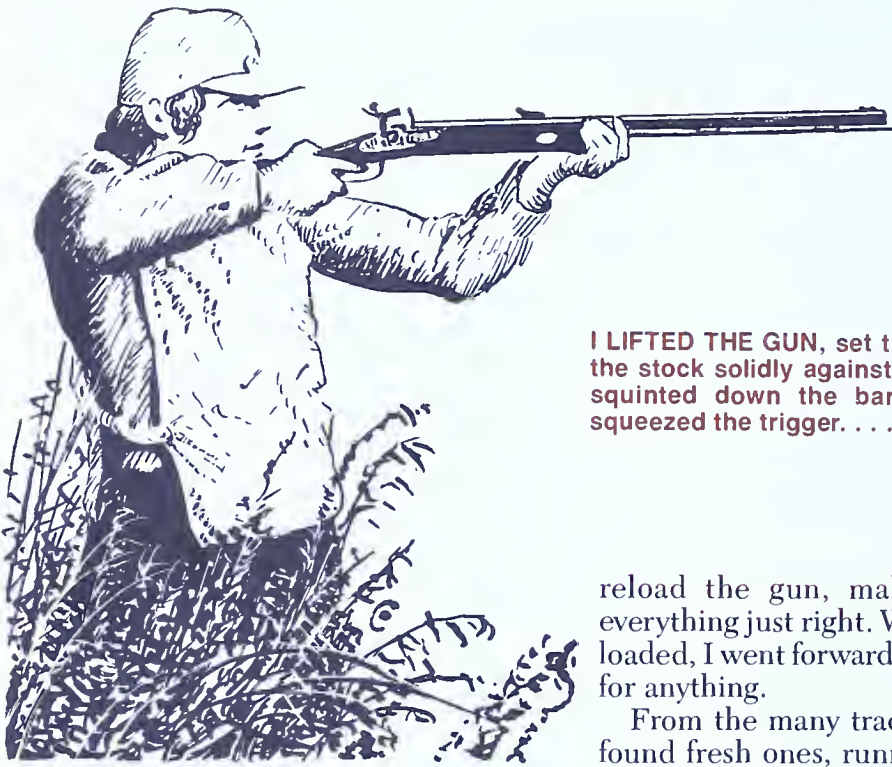
I clomped up the road in a happy dream, feeling like the daughter of a mountain man, out to bring home the venison, so to speak. I dug out a Twix bar from the fringed pouch that banged against my side, rattling with extra round balls and powder charges which, of course, I wouldn't need. I *had* to kill the deer on the first shot, I thought wryly, because I sure couldn't win any prizes for quick reloading.

I reached the top of the hill without seeing a thing, so I started sneaking quietly out the road that veered off to the left. At least I hoped I was sneaking quietly. With the old snow crunching under my boots, I imagine any deer within a half mile could have heard me coming. I kept an eye out, though, for running deer, the only kind I had been seeing all season.

## It Hit Me

I had already gone past the shape when it hit me. I stopped, looking back curiously at what looked for all the world like a deer's head growing out of the snow. But it was lying just off the road, and it wasn't moving. If it was a deer, it must be deaf and blind, a mere stump, I thought. I nearly continued on my way, but then I remembered Mom's binoculars that hung around my neck, for just such an emergency. A quick check wouldn't hurt. I brought the glasses up and studied the shape. Through the binoculars it looked even more like the back of a deer's head. If only it would move. I gave a very low whistle, almost under my breath. The head never budged. Getting bolder, I gave a louder whistle. Lo and behold the head turned a little to one side.

What a chance! I had caught a deer in its bed—asleep no less. I dropped the



**I LIFTED THE GUN, set the trigger, nestled the stock solidly against my shoulder, and squinted down the barrel. I aimed and squeezed the trigger. . . .**

binoculars and cocked the gun. The sound was loud in the stillness, and the head came around with a jerk, looking right at me. But it didn't get up. I half-expected the deer to yawn, stretch, and ask me what time it was. There was no way I could miss. I lifted the gun, set the trigger, nestled the stock solidly against my shoulder, and squinted down the barrel. I aimed and squeezed the trigger . . .

**PWOOFFF.**

That brought the deer to life. She leaped up and trotted off several yards and then stopped as if wondering what the strange noise had been. You could have knocked me over with a feather. The flint had sparked, the powder ignited . . . only problem was, the gun didn't go off. That had never happened to me before.

With shaking hands, I refilled the pan, the whole time just hoping she'd stay put. When I was finished, she was still there. Fifty yards, a little brush—no problem. But would the gun fire? I tried it. **BOOM!** The deer whirled, jumped and was gone. I started up the bank but then stopped. Trying to quiet my excited heart, I took a couple of minutes to

reload the gun, making sure I did everything just right. When the gun was loaded, I went forward on cat feet, ready for anything.

From the many tracks in the snow I found fresh ones, running full tilt. Figuring she would have gone maybe a hundred yards before showing blood, I crunched off, following the trail. The tracks went on . . . and on . . . It started to sink in that I had missed, clean missed. But how could that be, I wondered. Surely I wasn't that bad of a shot. But there was no doubt in my mind. There would have been blood for sure by now.

The trail came out on the road I had just come up. Disgusted with myself and with the muzzleloader, and wondering why I had ever taken up the old sport in the first place, I trudged back up the hill. I knew I'd never get such an easy shot like that again—never.

On the road that veered to the left, in almost the very spot I had shot at the deer, I saw Dad trudging up toward me. Doubly ashamed of myself, I told him the story. I was utterly discouraged but Dad wanted to look at the spot.

The first thing he found was a whole wad of deer hair that I had missed seeing. What a tracker I was, I told myself wryly. But I felt better, thinking that maybe I wasn't such a poor shot after all. Once again, I set out on the trail, this time with Dad trailing along just in case I missed anything. We came out to the road, crossed it, and followed the deer



out onto the flat, where she had paralyzed a little gully for a time. Here we separated, Dad followed the tracks, while I ranged out to the right, looking ahead and down the hollow. Glancing over at Dad, I suddenly saw him stop, tense, and cock his rifle. I shed my mittens and stood waiting, surrounded by a clump of brush that impaired my vision. He snapped the rifle up and fired, then beckoned me to join him as he stuffed another ball down the barrel. I rushed over to him, and he pointed down the hill. I could just make out the running form of a small deer, presumably the same one I, too, had missed. She'd had a traumatic day, but looked perfectly healthy to me.

"It was a long shot," Dad explained, "and I wouldn't have tried it except I thought it might be the one you clipped." He had been saying "wounded" before—now, I noticed, the term was "clipped," which soon, no doubt would be downgraded to "shaved some hair off." The tracks were confusing, and we followed several trails before we figured out the right one. Again we separated, heading through the woods in parallel. We had been tracking the deer for over half a mile, and it was not long before Dad rejoined me. While we had been fighting our way through some thick brush, the doe had simply circled around behind us and watched—probably had a good laugh—and then joined with another deer. We could see from the tracks how they had travelled together for a little way, and then split up, one running east and one west. There was no way of knowing which was which. It was more than a little disquieting to be outsmarted by a deer, but there was nothing to do about it but laugh. We found a big hemlock to lean our rifles against, and we dug sandwiches out of our pockets, discussing around mouthfuls of bologna and cheese what we were going to do next.

There seemed to be no sense in trying to figure out the trail. As there was never a sign of blood, or any hair except at the start, I was beginning to wonder if maybe she had just been shedding at



#### Question

As a farmer not required to have a hunting license to hunt on my property, must I still submit a big game harvest report card if I get a deer?

#### Answer

Yes. You must make up, complete and submit a harvest report card to the Harrisburg headquarters within five days of killing any big game animal—deer, bear and turkey. Information required: name and address of hunter, type and sex of animal taken, number of points—if applicable—and date, time, township or zone (turkey) and county of harvest.

the time. Still, there was a chance the deer or its companion could have run into the thick brushy woods to our left, or that there might be other deer in it. In any case, it was the same direction that would eventually take us into the same country we had come from. We agreed to try it.

Even though we were going the same way we stayed just in sight of each other as we worked our way through the fallen trees and annoying growth of small striped maple. The cover made the going hard and limited the range of vision. It was past two o'clock now; it was hard to believe hours had gone by since I had first spotted the deer in her bed. I was staying alert, but my mind was not always concentrating on the terrain. In fact, I was thinking about my friends at school and wondering what day I had to go back when my eye caught the movement of a running deer out ahead of me.

Running deer no longer excited me. I had been seeing them so often and knew they were nearly impossible to hit with the flintlock. But when the deer



WHEN THE deer slowed to a trot, I became interested, and when she stopped I was ready. Her back end was behind a tree, but her chest was clearly exposed. I cocked the gun, lifted and aimed—but there was so much brush.

slowed to a trot, I became interested, and when she stopped I was ready. Her back end was behind a tree, but her chest was clearly exposed. I cocked the gun, lifted and aimed—but there was so much brush. How was the bullet ever going to get through it, I wondered. I lowered the gun and then debated. It really wasn't that thick.

I lined the sights up very carefully this time, and as soon as I shot I saw the deer go down. I watched as she got to her feet and ran while I calmly and rationally reloaded. Glancing up, I saw Dad hurrying toward me. "Did you see her stumble?" I asked, not really believing it myself.

"Are you kidding?" Dad shot back, squinting through the trees. "I didn't even see it."

I'm not sure he even believed I had

shot an actual deer until we covered the 80 or so yards to the spot where the snow was hollowed out as though something had fallen in it. Once again there was hair, but no blood. This time, however, I was certain. "Give it a minute to lie down," Dad advised. So we waited, studying the tracks. After a few minutes I checked my powder and looked up at Dad, who nodded at me. I started out on the deer's tracks, but I hadn't gone far when I saw her lying down. Dad handed me his gun, because it was already loaded, and I went up to my deer, touching her eyeball with the muzzle of the gun. There was no reflex. Looking closely at the ruffled fur of the deer, I could see a minor abrasion at the base of her tail—as though someone had grazed her with a round ball earlier in the day. Curious.

I have never seen Dad so ecstatic, not even when I shot other deer with the '06. At last, I felt I understood—shooting a deer in the regular season is one thing. Tracking one and shooting it with a primitive rifle evens out the odds, maybe tips them a little bit in the deer's favor. With the muzzleloader, the sport truly is hunting.

Next year, when I buy my muzzleloader license, it won't be just because I have to.

## State Deer and Bear Scoring Program Slated for April

The Pennsylvania Game Commission will be conducting official deer and bear measuring sessions this coming April at our six region offices. Only deer and bear taken in Pennsylvania are eligible. Measurements will be taken by certified Boone & Crockett scorers and entered among the agency's official records. Scoring sessions will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on: April 9 at the Northwest Region Office, three miles south of Franklin on Route 8; April 8 at the Southwest Region Office, 339 W. Main St., Ligonier; April 9 at the Northcentral Region Office, two miles south of Jersey Shore on Route 44; April 9 at the Southcentral Region Office, one mile west of Huntingdon on Route 22; April 8 at the Northeast Region Office, at the intersections of Routes 415 and 118, Dallas; and on April 23 at the Southeast Region Office, seven miles north of Reading, one mile off route 222 on Snyder Road.





## *Year End Musings*

**By Jim Bashline**

ONE OF the most amazing facets of being a writer is that the more one writes the more endless the supply of ideas becomes. This is especially true among outdoor writers. A story about deer hunting, for example, leads one into all sorts of tangents involving natural history, what deer eat, how they are affected by weather, hunting techniques and firearms, preparation of venison, etc. etc. The never ending list of things to write about makes the work fun but also frustrating at the same time. There is only so much space in any magazine or newspaper, so some ideas never see print. Many subjects don't really deserve full treatment but ought to be touched on—or at least writers think they should be touched on. The following collection is an expansion of notes to myself that have been chased around the desk for several months and I thought it about time to do something with them.

### **Crow Watching**

I've learned to feel more than just a bit sorry for crows. They really don't

have many friends. Owls and hawks are their bitter enemies, and smaller songbirds torment them at every opportunity. Farmers and gardeners hate crows and devise all sorts of ways to eliminate them. Crows have a reputation for being rather clever and they are, to a degree. But how smart can crows be to assault a fake owl and keep on flying close to fuss at it even after seeing a dozen of their buddies fall to a hidden shotgunner?

Deer hunters have long cursed crows for betraying their presence while trying to pussyfoot through thick cover. But the longer I hunt whitetails, or any big game for that matter, in regions where crows are abundant, the more convinced I've become that crows help more than they hinder. The same crow that caws at you will also caw at the approaching buck you might not be aware of. Once a hunter stops moving and settles into a good spot, the crows usually stop their broadcasting. But if some other creature moves into the area, the new arrival gets the same loud welcome. The message? Pay attention to the crows when stump-hunting. They'll





**CROWS** are not always bad. Pay attention to them while stump-hunting. The same crow that caws at you will also caw at the approaching buck you might not be aware of.

let you know when man or beast is on the move, and you'll be wise to keep your eyes pointed in the direction of the racket. Only three seasons back a flock of crows allowed me to follow the path of a trio of deer from a ridge a full mile away to within 80 yards of my stand. One of the deer was a 6-point that ended up in my freezer. Not all crows are bad!

### Death Of A Sportsman

No, don't let the subtitle mislead you, this is not a eulogy for a specific hunting or fishing pal. We all lose one of those from time to time and know the personal heartache and the confusion a death can cause the deceased's spouse and family. Emotionally, socially, legally and economically, death is not usually a simple matter. It never has been and never will be, but far too many outdoor types make major mistakes while they're alive regarding the disposition of their "treasures."

The fishing and hunting equipment a person can amass during a lifetime astounds most non participants and even some of us who practice the sports. For example, it's not uncommon for a hunter who pursues a variety of game birds and animals to maintain a rack of a dozen or more firearms. If he loads his own ammunition, there will be another small truckfull of tools, bullets, powders and primers. I know at least 50 anglers who own nearly as many rods and some who

can count theirs above 100. And reels. Is there a serious angler in this nation who doesn't own at least two dozen and isn't currently shopping for one more? Boots, coats, vests, flies, knives, dogs, shares in hunting and fishing clubs, paintings and prints, and a long list of other wonderful things.

Unfortunately, the death of a sportsman throws a kink into family plans and, at times, a kink into the recently departed's plans as well. No veiled humor intended. Good old "Joe" or "Bill" always intended that his well worn 32 Special carbine be passed on to the nephew who was his namesake. The almost unused Leonard fly rod (the one with the sliding ring reel seat) was to be given to his best fishing buddy who constantly drooled over it. And a host of other items were to have been delivered to special friends, relatives or organizations. And don't we all know the sad stories? Oftentimes few, if any of the treasures end up in the hands of those the former owner wished them to. Auctions and yard sales take their toll and, at times, the "stuff" is tossed into the junk pile. Can't happen to my equipment, you say. Think again. Even when specific bequests are spelled out in properly notarized wills, confusion right after the wake can send all sorts of plans awry.

It's far better, in my opinion, to take care of such matters well before one cashes in. One should never cut himself short of equipment that will still be needed, but making a presentation while the giver and the receiver can still look each other in the eye should be seriously considered. You can be sure that your gifts are given if you're the one doing the giving. And besides, there's a selfish thrill involved here. It's a lot of fun to watch a friend's face when you say, "here, I want you to have this and now is the only time I can be sure you'll get it." Forget being on a deathbed or



**AMONG HUNTING and fishing enthusiasts there are usually some anxious years when little Lester or Louella is introduced to firearms and fishing tackle. The magic works about as often as it doesn't.**

making a Hollywood production out of it. Just smile and hand him the rod, reel, shotgun, hunting knife or whatever. You'll feel good about it and so will the recipient. And when the time comes, the chances are, your gift will again be passed on to some one who will appreciate it. It's a kind of immortality.

### **Anxious Parents And Grandparents**

In this age of everyone trying to do his or her "own thing," it's rare indeed to see the shoemaker's son or the teacher's daughter follow in their parent's chosen profession or avocation. Among hunting and fishing enthusiasts there are usually some anxious years when little Lester or Louella is introduced to firearms and tackle. The magic works about as often as it doesn't and there is no formula that covers the process. What makes a miniature Davey Crockett or a clone of the old man is locked in the genes and no amount of exposure to Hoppe's No. 9 or Mucilin can make it happen. Oddly, I'm discovering that the arrival of my first grandchild has caused me to think about this much more than I did about my own children.

Our two daughters were exposed to fishing and hunting expeditions, with all the trappings, on a regular basis from the moment they each were born. The first meat they ate was probably rabbit, grouse or trout, and both of them learned to tie flies (before they attended first grade) by watching at my elbow. Oh, they went fishing and hunting with me from time to time but the exposures didn't leave lasting effects. I suspect it's mostly because Sylvia and I were involved in outdoor activities as a business, not as a free time pursuit. And, I confess, I didn't spend as much time trying to interest them as I probably should have. Well, . . . that's in the past.

With Meridith Bashline-Kile I'm going to do the smart thing. The child



*will* learn to like fly fishing and bird shooting and she *will* become the best known fly tier since Dame Juliana Berners. I will buy a fly rod for her when she's about four and a vise and feathers a year later. Her first shotgun will be a nice little 28-gauge over/under, and I'll be the envy of every old coot who ever had a granddaughter.

Of course, I'm much too young to be a grandfather but I'm old enough to realize early mistakes made with my daughters and I certainly won't make the same ones with the new generation. No sir, not me. She'll love doing things with her grandpa or else I'll, I'll . . . well, I'll love her just the same.

### **Hooray For Air Guns**

1988 marked the 50th Anniversary of Daisy's Red Ryder Carbine. The best known BB gun in America, the Red Ryder was once the most coveted possession among ten-year-olds. A lot of us back in the 30s and 40s learned to shoot with one of them. We were limited somewhat, because the accuracy level of the BB guns wasn't what you'd call precise. With today's 177-caliber pellet air rifles and pistols, however, powered by

**FOR ABOUT the price of a decent 22 rifle a highly accurate air rifle can be had, and a year's supply of pellets won't set you back more than 12 bucks.**

compressing air or CO<sub>2</sub> cylinders, the picture has changed drastically. Even the most inexpensive air rifles sold today will shoot rings around Red Ryder in terms of accuracy, and this is important to the old "kids" as well as the youngsters.

To become a good shooter one must practice a great deal, yet in today's more populated world, finding a convenient place to shoot is not always easy. Urban and suburban neighbors don't feel comfortable hearing the crack of even a 22 rifle outside their living rooms, and without a rather elaborate remodeling job, most homes are not equipped for indoor shooting of rimfires. Air rifles, however, can be fired safely in the basement or attic, with a backstop no more complex than a half dozen layers of corrugated cardboard.

I used to think that air guns were for kids. Not any more. Even Olympics feature several air gun events, and it's obvious that the Americans are learning how to compete in this once European dominated sport. For the past five years I've been shooting air rifles and pistols regularly in my basement at the pre-



scribed international distance of 10 meters. It's helped keep my eye and trigger finger sharp, and as a result, my field shooting has not gone into a slump.

For about the price of a decent 22 rifle a highly accurate air rifle can be had and a year's supply of pellets won't set you back more than 12 bucks. In most states there are no restrictions on owning or buying an air gun (but check first) and they can be carried without any paperwork. The best paper work they perform is on targets, and you'll be a better shooter inside of a couple weeks, I promise.



**PARKER D. RIDAY**, right, Bartonsville, recently received the Game Commission's Senior Wildlife Conservation Award in recognition of his 21 years of service on the agency's taxidermy examining board. Bureau of Law Enforcement Assistant Director **Jerry Wendt** presented the award at the conclusion of the fall '88 taxidermy examination.





**THE MOMENT** came as we crested the next bench of the hill. There they were—five does. They were walking about 80 yards to our left, paying no attention to us at all.

## Doe Season, From A Different View

By Ann Matscherz

**I**T'S TOUGH being a hunter, especially one who is female. But as I look back on the first day of doe season, the excitement still clings in my mind.

My husband Rick had always wanted me to go hunting with him. Four years ago I decided to try it. Most of my family hunts, but I never got the fever, I really didn't know what the hoopla was all about.

All our plans were made. We had antlerless deer licenses for Greene County. We would leave that morning to drive down.

The alarm went off at 4:30. With my eyes barely open, I made coffee, packed lunches, and got the kids ready. Rick put our equipment in the Blazer. I was the last to get dressed, but before I did I checked to see if it had snowed. No luck; just the snow from the day before.

We dropped our kids off at a neighbor's house and were on the road by 5 o'clock.

Traffic was light until we hit the Greene county line. As we entered Waynesburg we found ourselves in the midst of a sea of orange. This was deer country and the hunters knew it. Cars were bumper to bumper. Rush hour conditions this early in the morning put us 20 minutes behind schedule, and it was obvious it would be daylight before we got to our hunting spot.

### On the Bench

Rick had my spot all picked out for me. He explained that he would leave the car keys with me in case I needed to warm myself. We climbed out of the truck, put our heavy coats on and headed out across the field. The air was cold and crisp, and the snow under our

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## **GAME NEWS**

**For a Friend . . .**

feet crunched. As we walked we looked for sign, hoping to see a deer. We finally worked our way to the spot. I sat on the bench of a hillside. I could see almost to the top of the hill. If anything crossed up there I would get a clear shot. Below me, the hill leveled off then dropped into a small running stream.

As I watched Rick walk off to his spot, I realized I was on my own. I loaded my gun with six 170-grain 30-30 Remington soft points. I figured that should be plenty. A feeling of confidence came over me. I was going to make Rick proud of me. I settled into my spot on that hill, certain that if I saw a deer I could shoot it. I waited, straining my ears to pick up every rustle of leaves, every creak of a tree. There was shooting all around me.

About 8:30 I just could not take it any more. My feet were numb; my face was now frozen, and my hands were stiff. Still I had not seen or heard a deer. I gathered myself together and gave up. I began to walk back to the Blazer. The closer I got to it the more I felt like a failure. I just couldn't give up now, I decided. Just as I turned around and started making my way back into the woods I met Rick walking out. We talked for a few minutes and, instead of

giving up, he convinced me to walk with him.

About an hour went by with us walking, resting and occasionally talking. Being with an avid hunter got my hopes high once more. If only we would see something.

The moment came as we crested the next bench of the hill. There they were—five does. They were walking about 80 yards to our left, paying no attention to us at all. I was so intent on watching the deer and Rick that I forgot why I was there. He slowly raised his gun and then waited for one to come into a clearing. There it was. I never heard the shot. The doe fell straight down. She fell so fast that Rick lost sight of her in his scope after he fired. He wasn't sure he even hit it. My heart was pounding hard as I screamed, "You got her. She's down and isn't moving." I headed for the spot where she laid. He still couldn't see her. The way she fell there was no white showing at all. She looked like a brown log or clump of dirt. When I ran up to her I was out of breath but very excited. "See I told you you got her."

I watched as he tagged and field-dressed his prize. My emotions were so high at that time you would have thought I had shot the deer. I helped him drag her to the Blazer, overflowing with pride that I was able to help.

Even if I never shoot a deer of my own I've still experienced the thrill all hunters feel at one time or another, and I'll always remember the wonderful hunting trip my husband and I shared.

### **Use 800 Numbers**

Use the agency's new toll free (800) numbers to contact a wildlife conservation officer; their home phone numbers are no longer being published. In the Northwest Region call 1-800-533-6764; Southwest Region, 1-800-243-8519; Northcentral Region, 1-800-422-7551; Southcentral Region, 1-800-422-7554; Northeast Region, 1-800-228-0789, and Southeast Region, 1-800-228-0791. Phones will be manned around the clock during the major hunting seasons, about 15 hours a day at other times.



# Return to Camp Mountain

Glenn Ellison

WITH AN ALL too familiar snort, the large doe leaped out from behind a dead fall, bounded over the edge of the ridge and was gone. It was noon already and this was the first deer I had seen. I flopped down on a log, mentally kicking myself for not seeing the doe before she spooked. I closed my eyes briefly and decided to blame my error on jet lag.

It was the first Friday of the 1983 buck season. In the wee hours of Thursday morning my two-year-old son Travis and I had sleepily boarded a jet in Fairbanks, Alaska. For twelve hours we drew pictures, read stories, and fitfully dozed while the world below slept. Now, having traveled over 5000 miles and losing five hours in time zone changes in the process, I was trying to clean the cobwebs out of my brain and connect with a Pennsylvania buck for the first time in 14 years. Booting the doe told me some cobwebs remained.

My Mother, Audrey, met us at the Allentown airport. While Travis slept at my parents' home, I proceeded to unpack some things and repack others as I prepared to head north with my Dad, George. With the packing done I went to the nearby licensing agent for my nonresident license. The clerk read the address on my drivers license, looked up and said with a questioning expression, "You're a long way from home aren't you?"

"Yes," I said, "but it's nice to be back." We chatted for awhile. Being a transplanted Pennsylvania sportsman, I assured him Alaska wasn't the only state with fine big game hunting. He asked me about Alaska. I told him about the north, where I managed the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. I painted verbal pictures of the Porcupine caribou herd, which calves on the refuge, and their annual migration of hundreds of miles. Presently numbering about 165,000 animals, it is one of the largest caribou

herds in the world. I told him of the large populations of Dall sheep and brown bears which inhabit the area, too.

"How big is the refuge?" he asked.

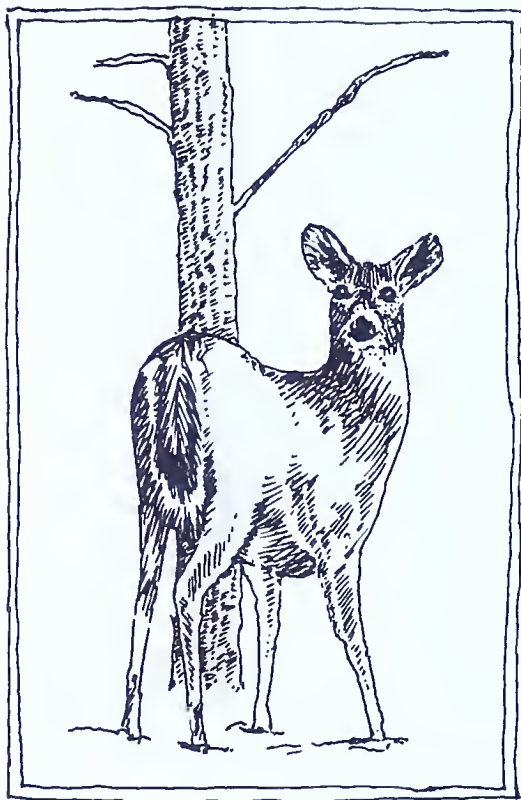
"About 19.5 million acres," I replied. "About two-thirds the size of Pennsylvania." He whistled softly. I think I gave him a new meaning to the term "the back 40." The arrival of some customers brought our chat to an end. He wished me luck as I headed out.

At my parents' place I made a quick check of the equipment Dad had set aside. Piled neatly in the corner were my Dad's 6mm Remington Model 700 and the ammunition I was going to borrow, a sleeping bag, a venerable Woolrich coat left over from the "Days of Yore," a blaze orange vest and hat, and a pair of Redwing boots that I had left behind many years ago. I smiled. My Dad's supply of assorted hunting garb and equipment brought back a lot of memories. They also saved me the necessity of dragging a lot of extra gear a quarter of the way around the world and back.

Dad and I were on our way to Sullivan County and the hunting cabin by 7:00 p.m. Mom had volunteered to take care of Travis while I hunted and before my wife and daughter joined us for the holidays. The miles rolled by as Dad and I caught up on events since my last visit. As we passed through Millville, heading north, my anticipation quickened. We were entering the good deer country I remembered from earlier years. Through Unityville, Muncy Valley, past Hunter's Lake, down Ogdonia Creek, up the Loyalsock to Hillsgrove, and then the twisting road up Camp Mountain. It had been years since I had hunted deer in Pennsylvania, so it was with great anticipation that I turned the station wagon into the lane leading to the Austin Club.

One mile, 15 minutes and 30 years of vignettes later we arrived at the cabin.

Nestled on a small flat at the base of a steep bank and surrounded by large maples, the old two-story homestead is timeless. I entered the cabin. It was cold but had not yet acquired the bone soaking chill of abandonment as most of the hunting crew had left only 48 hours earlier. I was hit by the camp's unique, undescrivable odor. Etched in the memory of youth, the smell is one of those barely tangible associations which is difficult to describe yet unforgettable and evokes vivid memories when encountered.



While Dad fired up the gas lantern and wood stove, I unloaded the car and then, flashlight in hand, with a quart dipper banging irregularly in a metal water pail, I threaded my way down to the spring. I stood silently for a few minutes after filling the pail. The spring was surrounded by tall hemlocks. Above the spring on the drier hillside were maples and hickories. Their branches swayed in the breeze, making a rustling sound in the black moonless sky. The beautiful, varied and majestic eastern mixed hard-

wood forest was one thing I miss in Alaska. Orion stood prominently in the winter sky and the Big Dipper pointed towards the North Star, the direction from which I had just come.

In the cabin I pulled my sleeping bag out of its stuff sack and placed it on the newest of the assorted, aged beds. While Dad and I sipped hot coffee and tended the stove we discussed plans for the next day. Because most of the deer seen on the first two days of the season had been in the valley leading to Hills-grove, we decided to hunt the area just above the valley floor. Then, depending upon results, we would either stay in the area or go back on top of Camp Mountain.

The heat from the wood stove slowly won its battle with the cold. At the rate of about one layer per hour we shed coats, vests, and sweaters. By midnight we had pretty well caught up on news and absorbed enough caffeine to ensure a restless night's sleep. We turned in only to lay awake with anticipation and our thoughts.

**FOR THE rest of the morning I poked through the thickest cover I could find. Sign was abundant and I saw deer regularly but always does or fawns.**

With my body's clock totally awry from the marvel of modern travel and the excitement of the coming deer hunt, I spent a fitful night. Periodic squeaks from his bed and a 2:00 a.m. break to check the stars indicated Dad wasn't faring much better. Between 4:00 and 5:00 I drifted off only to be blasted from bed by the alarm at 5:30.

With breakfast done we headed for the woods. Dad walked around the side of Roundtop and down the steep hill above the old Hillsgrove road. I headed down the hollow, entering the timber just at daylight. A light breeze rustled the dry leaves. Clouds had moved in during the night, making the arrival of full daylight a slow process. Slowly I





moved through a stand of large hemlocks into an area dominated by beech. As quietly as possible, which wasn't very quiet, I moved down the steep hillside to a bench which paralleled the old Hills Grove Road. Three hours after entering the timber I met Dad. I was still looking for my first deer of the day. He had seen two does, ones I apparently pushed out to him as I moved along the bench. We heard no shooting in the area and sign of activity, deer or otherwise, was very sparse. We decided to head back on top of Camp Mountain. Two hours later I spooked the doe mentioned at the beginning.

Just before I spooked her, Dad and I had agreed to separate for the remainder of the day. Despite the noisy conditions I decided to spend the afternoon sneaking through the timber. Patience while sitting had never been my long suit. With few hunters in the mountains I doubted the deer would be moving on their own. Over the years I've walked up on many deer, and even taken a few under similar conditions, so I decided to move on. Besides, I was interested in getting reacquainted with Camp Mountain.

I eased along an old logging road in the direction of Huckle Run. The long abandoned road was leaf covered and noisy but not nearly as noisy as the area off the road. As I approached Huckle Run I turned to the east. I spent the afternoon alternately crunching leaves and sitting for brief periods. By dark I had seen a doe and her fawn, two large whitetails bobbing through the timber, and a gray squirrel. Dad greeted me when I got back to camp. His luck had been similar.

My brother, Brad, and a friend, Steve Musser, arrived about 9:00 that evening. By the time they arrived the clouds hid the stars, the temperature was well below freezing, and the wind had increased. A change in the weather was imminent. My sleeping bag beckoned and I responded in an effort to get caught up on some of the sleep I had missed the past few nights.

At 5:30 we arose to a world of white.

The snow was tapering off after accumulating about three inches. With a fresh snow our spirits rose in anticipation of a fine day of hunting with the improved conditions.

I headed back on top of Camp Mountain, the area where I had the greatest hunting success over the years. The crunchy leaves of yesterday were now quiet underfoot and visibility in the dark timber was much improved. I crossed deer tracks headed in the direction I was going. Hunters were out in force. By mid-morning I had met a few hunters, crossed the tracks of others, and heard numerous shots. The activity was in striking contrast to the previous day.

### I Did Likewise

Hemlock thickets were the most likely spots for deer to head with all the activity, so I did likewise. Fresh deer tracks covered the ground as I entered the first thicket. I moved slowly, avoiding the fallen twigs which still snapped underfoot whenever I was careless. Kneeling down, I searched for deer or, more likely, deer legs. After only a few minutes I saw one leg and then another. The deer were about 50 yards from me, but I couldn't see anything but legs and bellies. They were moving slowly through the thicket; six in all. I shadowed them for about 100 yards. Occasionally I could identify a deer, always antlerless, though I was never sure I identified all of them. Finally their progress exceeded mine and they drifted out of sight.

For the rest of the morning I poked through the thickest cover I could find. Sign was abundant and I saw deer regularly but always does or fawns. I had just finished eating a sandwich while watching a small clearing. As I resumed my sneaking I heard deer running. I stepped next to a large hemlock and dropped to my knees. The deer entered the thicket and slowed to a walk. They looked furtively over their shoulders and then proceeded in my direction. The herd was scattered, and soon I had deer on each side and directly ahead of



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me. Keeping as motionless as possible, I searched for antlers. Eleven deer and not a buck in the bunch. A large doe 30 feet in front of me finally spotted something she wasn't sure about. With her eyes riveting me as only a deer can do she stomped her front left foot. Stiff legged, she took a step and then stomped her foot again. By now the other deer were all watching the doe, and tuned into the fact that at least she thought something was amiss. Finally the doe snorted and, flag flying, bounded off at a right angle to the direction she had come. The others followed, trusting her judgment that all was not as it should be in the hemlocks.

The sun came out, further brightening an already magnificent day. By three o'clock I was overlooking an open timbered area. To my left was another hemlock thicket, my next destination. Taking a break, I squatted with my back against the trunk of a large beech tree. The tall tree with the smooth gray bark was a welcome change from interior Alaska's endless miles of mostly stunted black spruce. As I munched an apple I tallied the deer I had seen; 32 since daylight and only three had passed unidentified.

Movement to my left drew my attention. A deer; a buck, stepped out from behind a very large hemlock snag. In one fluid motion I dropped the apple core in the snow, raised the 6mm and fired. The buck fell and never moved. I picked up what was left of my apple and finished it as I walked the 60 yards to the deer. As I admired the 6-point rack, a doe stepped out from behind another deadfall 25 yards away. She showed no alarm and simply stared at me. I watched her for awhile and then re-



turned to the business at hand. I filled out my tag and attached it to the buck. Though I had shot several bucks elsewhere in the country in the intervening 14 years since my last Pennsylvania buck, this one was special. The antlers were small but perfectly formed and symmetrical. I dressed the buck. The bullet had hit the heart, ending the buck's life quickly. Throughout the time it took me to dress the buck, clean and stow my gear and affix the drag rope; the doe alternately fed and watched me without apparent alarm. I finally wished her well and set off dragging her companion.

The drag was mostly down hill to the cabin, and the snow made it that much easier. Everyone was in camp by the time I got there. Plenty of deer had been seen though I was the only one who had seen a buck. We recounted events and then headed home; a very happy group of hunters.

# Big Bucks &



**HUNTING** out of Cole's Lodge, Greene County, James Wood and Jane (not pictured), Terry, Dirk, Earnest, John and Tim Cole each had a buck by 10 o'clock on last year's opening day.



**SEAN MITCHELL**, above, hunted the family's strong County farm for this big 9-point. Bob Mick and son Chris each scored last year; Bob found a 4-point in Clarion County; Chris got his 5-point in Forest County.



**JAMIE BOLLINGER**, above, Bellwood, dropped this big 9-point on the second Friday of last year's regular deer season. Clinton County is where Dan Helm, Elizabethtown, Mike Schmalzer, Bethlehem, Jeff Crick, Syra, New York, and Ron Espenshade, Halifax found these opening day bucks.





# Happy Hunters



**MAX HITESMAN**, above, Muncy, poses with the 49th deer he's taken with his 303 Savage Model 99. Below, Paul Bortner, left, got this 9-point in Clearfield County, and Lamar Glatfelter got the 8-point in Franklin County.



**BOB KERSTETTER**, Selinsgrove, found this 200-pound 12-pointer on Shade Mountain in Snyder County.



**D LOREK**, left, Fostoria, Ohio, took this, his first Pennsylvania buck, in Crawford County. Glenn Gualtieri, w, Media, hunted 17 years before connecting with a t, this nice Chester County 8-point.



**RICK MATEY**, above, dropped this Jefferson County 11-point on the last day of the '87 season. Bill Keller, Newtown, took this Bucks County 9-point on an area scheduled to become a housing development.





# FIELD NOTES



## Thoughtful

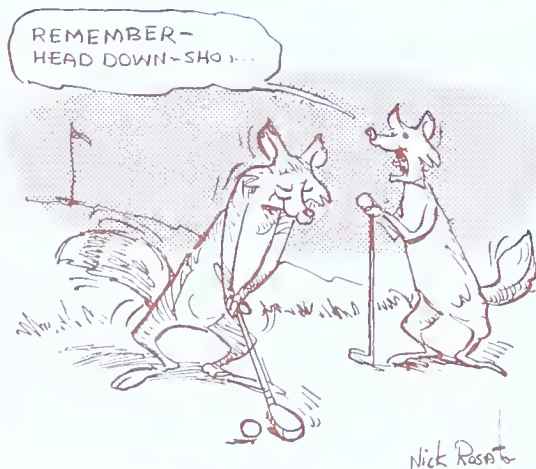
**ELK COUNTY**—Duane Hart, Cochran, recently gave me small thermometer along with a note saying that he gave one like it to each of the landowners who let him on their properties last year. The gift alone would no doubt keep many lands open to him, but the phrase “Thanks for permitting an appreciative sportsman to enjoy your land,” printed on top of the thermometer, makes the gift even more meaningful. All sportsmen owe Duane and others like him a tip of the hat. It’s such fine sportsmen that provide the key to so much private land being open in Pennsylvania.—WCO Richard Bodenhorn, Ridgway.

## Up and at It

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—5:30 Monday morning and I was at the latrine sink, brushing my teeth, when I turned to the trainee at the next sink and said, “Boy, Jerry, I can think of a thousand places I’d rather be right now.” He turned, with both eyes still closed, and replied, “only a thousand?”—Trainee Douglas C. Carney.

## Needs Policing

**JEFFERSON COUNTY**—In talking with landowners I’ve found their number one complaint to be problems with ATV drivers. The destruction indiscriminate drivers cause to pastures, crops and forests is glaringly apparent, although the erosion and sedimentation problems they cause can be worse but less obvious. Contrary to what many believe, ownership of an ATV doesn’t include the right to ride anywhere anytime. Users are required by law to have landowner permission, and most public ground, including all State Game Lands, are closed to such vehicles. Abuse by some operators will likely bring tighter restrictions and increased enforcement, so perhaps responsible drivers should heed our SPORT program and start policing their own ranks.—WCO Donald Chaybin, Brookville.



## One Stroke

**CENTRE COUNTY**—Some strange happenings went on at a nearby golf course last summer. First, five skunks wandered on to a green and promptly dropped dead. Later, a pair of playful red foxes got in the habit of grabbing golf balls and carrying them off into the woods. I haven’t yet learned, however, how to score such rounds.—WCO Jack Weaver, Bellefonte.

## Just by Saying Thanks

**WASHINGTON COUNTY**—I’m always pleased when a landowner tells me about hunters who don’t just ask for permission, but also stop to say thanks afterwards, too. If more hunters realized how valuable such modest courtesy means in terms of keeping lands open to public hunting, I’m sure we all would have plenty of room to hunt.—WCO Matthew Hough, Washington.



## But He Got the Cubs

**BRADFORD COUNTY**—Bear trapping has made a forester out of my neighboring officer Bill Bower. Bill arrived at a trap site and found a bear in the trap and her two cubs up a nearby sapling. Bill got approval from the landowner to cut the tree down, which he then did, but the tree—and the cubs—got hung up on another tree. Bill went back for permission, but then the second tree got hung up, too. Everything went according to plan the third time around, but I can just imagine the poor landowner thinking his entire forest was going to be toppled.—WCO A. Dean Rockwell, Sayre.

## Family Affairs

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—As part of our training several of us taught a hunter-trapper education class. The class went fine, and I was very impressed at the number of fathers and mothers who took the course with their children. Who says you can't teach old dogs new tricks? You can when they want to learn.—Trainee Donald R. Daugherty.

## Extend a Little Courtesy

Sportsmen, please ask for permission before hunting or trapping on private property. We're really fortunate to have access to so much private land in Pennsylvania. Do your part to help keep it that way.—LMO Barry S. Zaffuto, Ebensburg.

## Common Sense

**CAMERON COUNTY**—Paul H. Blackman's article "Armed Citizens & Crime Control," in the July '88 *American Rifleman*, shot a lot of holes in many of the myths touted by the anti-gun crowd. For example, it's often suggested that a person act passively and offer no resistance when accosted. According to the author's statistics, though, those who follow such advice are about twice as likely to be injured than those who protect themselves with a firearm.—WCO Joe Carlos, Driftwood.



## Food and Cover

Last August I found pheasant broods on three Game Lands which, to me, anyway, prove the stocking of hens in the right habitat is worthwhile. Perhaps there would be a lot more pheasants around if more landowners set aside a little space for wildlife.—LMO Stephen L. Opet, Tamaqua.

## Good Advice

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—If you're a novice trapper you can use all the help you can get, and one of the best places to start is with the local chapter of the Pennsylvania Trapper's Association. Working with veteran trappers is the best way to learn proper techniques, and it's vitally important for all of us to keep trapping a humane, enjoyable and ethical sport, and an accepted wildlife management tool.—Trainee Donald R. Burchell.

## Good Riddance

**ADAMS COUNTY**—During his three years as head of a deer research team at Gettysburg, Doug Cotum trapped, tranquilized, tagged, collared and studied hundreds of whitetails. On the last day of his project, however, he got to handle one more—one that had just run into his brand new car, causing over \$1000 in damages. The deer probably just wanted to say good-bye, but I think Doug would have preferred a simple note.—WCO Mike Dubaich, Aspers.



### Procrastinator

**McKEAN COUNTY**—I received a report last July about a roadkilled deer at the end of a person's driveway. When I went to pick it up I couldn't find it, though, so I went up to the house to find out just where it was. The lady who answered the door said, "How could you miss it? It's been down at the end of my driveway since last December." Sure enough, under all the summer weeds, were a backbone, ribcage, a couple of leg bones and a patch of hide. —WCO John Dzemyan, Smethport.

### Anxious Times

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—The pressure was on, the deadline was fast approaching, and I was staying up late, trying to come up with a Field Note—we're each required to write one every month. A fellow officer was also burning the midnight oil. He was anxiously awaiting a call announcing the birth of his child. I don't know which was worse, the pacing and the waiting, or trying to come up with an interesting Field Note. —Trainee L. Spotts.

### Satisfying

**SCHUYLKILL COUNTY**—Hunter education instructors are dedicated unpaid volunteers who teach youngsters and parents how to be safe, ethical sportsmen. After seeing so many happy faces afield last fall I understand the old cliché, "money isn't everything." —WCO John Shutkufski.

## Texas

**SNYDER COUNTY**—Esther Kreider and I had just finished arranging a deputy meeting I was going to hold at her restaurant when a trivia question came over the local radio. The first person to phone in the correct answer to which state has the most deer would get a prize. Of course, all the girls in the restaurant were yelling at me for the answer. I heard later that Esther was the first correct caller, and I hope she enjoyed her free tan and tone. It just goes to show, sometimes I am in the right place at the right time. —WCO John Roller, Beavertown.

### Do Your Part

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—Sportsmen, please, if you witness or have any information about a game law violation call the nearest region office. Timely reports are vital to effective law enforcement. It's been said before, but it's worth repeating: Game law violators are stealing from all of us. Come on, be a SPORT. —Trainee Keith A. Snyder.



### Covering All Bases

**POTTER COUNTY**—Dick Matteson, Galeton, was hunting woodchucks last summer when he saw a mother skunk and four young ambling across a field. When Dick made a noise the four little ones quickly formed a circle, each with its business end pointing out. —WCO Ron Clouser, Galeton.



## And Still Mad, Too

**LYCOMING COUNTY**—A beekeeper called me last June with some good news and some bad news. The good news was that a bear was in the culvert trap I had set. The bad news was that tires on the trap trailer were flat. At the scene I noticed tooth marks on the tires, leading me to think I had a cub in the trap and an angry female nearby. The trapped bear weighed 150 pounds, however, but there was an angry bear nearby—an amorous male. I had just begun to change the tires when the big bruin appeared and tried to roll the trap over. For two hours the bear made repeated charges, bluffing and clacking his teeth. And as time wore on he became more aggressive, growling, curling his lips, and standing up like grizzlies often do. When it became obvious I wasn't going to get the tires changed, I left to get another trap to transfer the female to. On my return, Romeo was still there. I tranquilized the female, got her into the good trap, and then reset the other. As I began to leave the scene my vehicle started to rock back and forth; the old bear hadn't given up. Eventually I chased him off and was finally able to get the female to a release site. I had just gotten home when the beekeeper called. Another bear was in the broken trap. Then, while he was still on the phone, he told me another bear had arrived. The trapped bear turned out to be a 250-pound male and, as far as I know, my big buddy Romeo is still out there.—WCO Daniel Marks, Williamsport.

## Sophisticated Methods

**TRAINING SCHOOL**—I think all of us were impressed with our tour of the State Police Crime Laboratory. It was amazing to see how much information can be compiled from just a little evidence. State of the art technology is but one tool being used by the Game Commission and other law enforcement agencies. With wildlife law enforcement's move to the future, the future looks good for wildlife.—Trainee Scott J. Lorow.

## Young Sports

**WESTMORELAND COUNTY**—Three youngsters, ages eight to 15, witnessed a rabbit poaching incident. They gathered all the pertinent information and immediately reported it. When I arrived at the scene they each recounted the incident and was willing to testify if needed. The suspect pleaded guilty, so their testimony wasn't needed, but without their involvement the violator would never have been apprehended. Thanks, guys.—WCO Dennis Neideigh, Greensburg.



## Practice

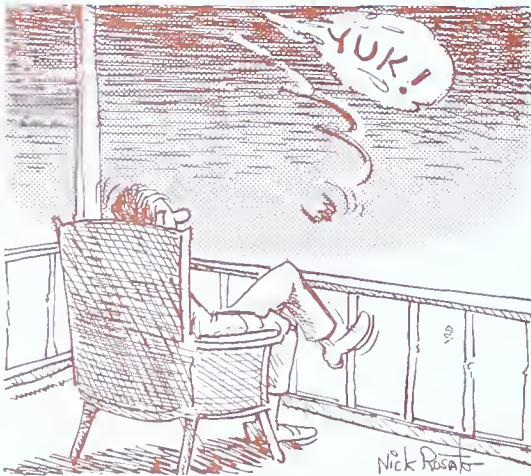
**TRAINING SCHOOL**—Remember those fast flying doves in September? If you missed some, don't feel bad. The day before the season opened I watched a kestrel try to catch one, but it had no success either.—Trainee Jerry A. Bish.

## Call Ligonier

**SOMERSET COUNTY**—Our 800 phone network has been up and running for several months now, and many people have become accustomed to the fact that the home phone numbers of wildlife conservation officers are no longer being given to the public. I'm not sure, however, how much longer I'll be able to use that excuse for not giving our new phone number to my mother-in-law.—WCO Clifford E. Guindon, Jr., Boswell.

## Music to the Ears

**ARMSTRONG COUNTY**—Several other officers and I were assigned to teach self-defense and arrest tactics to the new class of trainees. The students worked in pairs, with one acting as an officer and the other as an assailant. How the memories came flooding back as I watched the students master the techniques and become more confident. The grunts, groans and thuds of bodies hitting the mats was music to my ears. I even jokingly asked the trainees where else they could get paid for having so much fun. They didn't appreciate my humor, however, but I'm sure the day will come when they appreciate the lessons. —WCO Al Scott, Rural Valley.



## Fancy Flying

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY**—Deputy Stafferi was on his back porch one night last summer when he saw a great horned owl catch a bat in flight. To an owl a bat is probably just a mouse with wings, but I wonder how good they taste. —WCO William Wasserman, Montgomeryville.

## Escaping the Heat

**CUMBERLAND COUNTY**—Last August three immature white ibis visited a State Game Lands here. It's unusual to find these shorebirds north of the Carolinas. —WCO Jim Binder, Shipensburg.

## And Wildlife's

**CLARION COUNTY**—Most of the arrests I made last summer were for driving ATVs on State Game Lands, and the most common excuse was that the lands don't belong to anybody. Well, the lands don't belong to any individual; they belong to the Game Commission. I like to think they belong to the hunters, trappers and others who support our efforts, however, and that we officers are just protecting their interests. —WCO Jim Egley, Knox.

## Good Signs

**MERCER COUNTY**—Last summer, with help from Biologist Hugh Palmer and I & E Supervisor Bob MacWilliams, the county sportsmen censused the study area here where the Sichuan-ring-neck pheasants had been released almost a year earlier. In about eight hours, in a four-square-mile area, the group found 40 pheasant broods. We were all pleased with the good signs, and I'd like to thank the county sportsmen for all their work and support. It may take years, but someday we may see pheasants again like we did 20 years ago. —WCO John McKellop, Sandy Lake.

## Not to Be Taken Lightly

**CAMBRIA COUNTY**—It was a major event; 150 cars, 400 spectators, spotlights crisscrossing the evening sky, and sacrificial offerings of french fries and ice cream being laid out where the "beast" had last been seen. All was for nothing that particular night. LMO Barry Zaffuto and I were lucky. We didn't have to interrupt the spectacle, disappoint the anxious crowd, and tranquilize and take away the 500-pound nuisance bear which, as far as I'm concerned, had become a hazard. I hate to think about what it might take, but people in many areas are going to have to start treating our black bears with a little more respect. —WCO Lawrence A. Olsavsky, Colver.



# Commissioner Doeblar Resigns

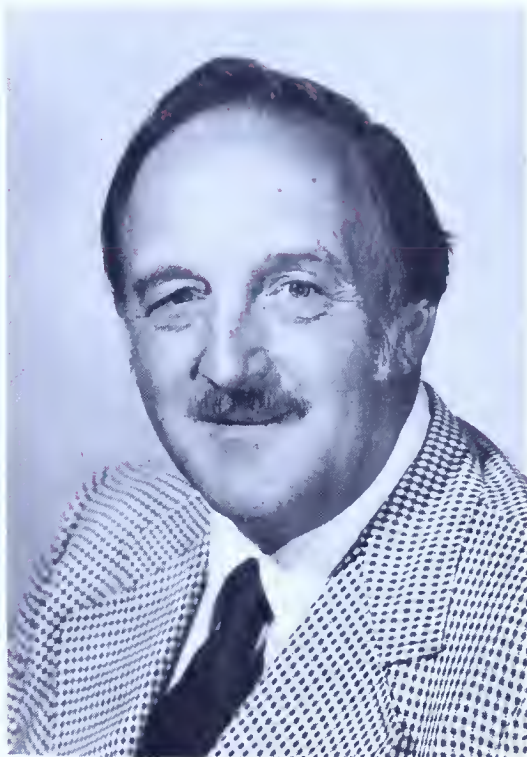
**I**N A surprising move at the close of the October meeting of the Game Commission, Taylor A. "Ted" Doeblar resigned, effective immediately.

In announcing his decision to step down, Doeblar said, "I've had plenty of time to be involved and observe our many successful programs, our professional wildlife personnel and the Commission system of operating an independent state agency. I've truly been impressed by the overall operation and I'm one who doesn't impress easily."

Doeblar, a former Commission president who has served since 1982, said he was totally frustrated trying to be a non-political, issue oriented commissioner, in an environment "where (others) unfairly attack our commission, while any response by commissioners or professional staff is viewed by those same (persons) as improper retribution."

"As a private citizen," noted Doeblar, "I will be free to disagree with commission detractors." The Jersey shore agriculturalist said he plans to mount a campaign to communicate with legislators and rank and file sportsmen, and, most importantly, "See if there are enough people out there to organize a statewide group dedicated to 'saving our independent Fish and Game Commissions.' All of these projects can best be handled on the 'outside' as a private citizen and not as a member of the Commission."

The Clinton County farmer is the sole owner of T.A. Doeblar and Son, the



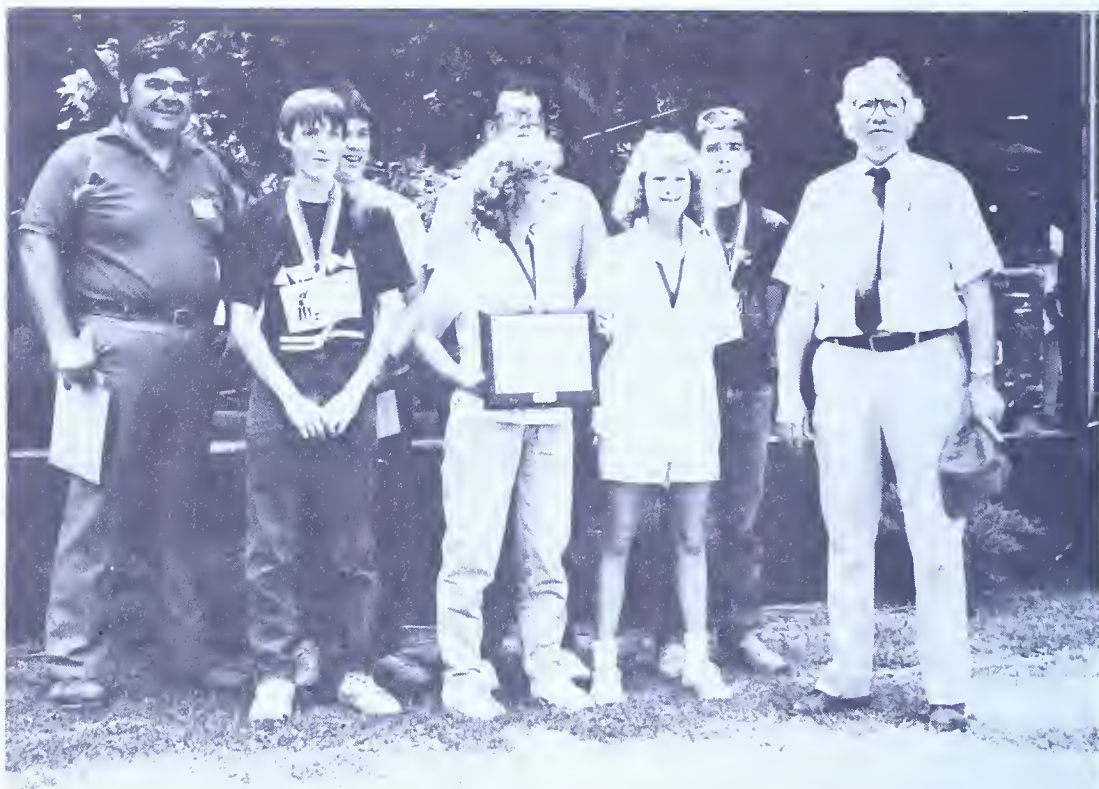
**TAYLOR A. "TED" DOEBLER unexpectedly resigned as a commissioner, but he plans on continuing his conservation efforts by organizing a statewide group of sportsmen dedicated to keeping the Game and Fish Commissions separate and independent agencies.**

largest seed corn production company in the East, and is president of the hybrid seed corn sales and distribution company known as Doeblar's Penna. Hybrids, Inc., distributors of Doeblar's Hybrids in seven eastern states.

Doeblar was first appointed to the Game Commission in May, 1982, to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Dave Drakula. He was then reappointed to a full, 8-year term in June, 1983.

In other action taken at the October meeting, the Commission approved acquisition of 6090 acres to be added to State Game Lands at a cost of \$1,220,050. New tracts are being acquired in Armstrong, Berks, Blair, Butler, Carbon, Dauphin, Elk, Fayette, Jefferson, Lackawanna, Lehigh, McKean, Northampton, Schuylkill, Venango and Washington counties.





SCHUYLKILL COUNTY'S Blue Mountain High School won this year's state Envirothon. Team members are, left to right, Brandie Searle, Chris Brommer, Karen Boltz, Richard Eckert, Christell Berger and Matt Walters. The team is flanked by advisor Glenn Luckenbill, left, and DER Secretary Art Davis.

Five years old and growing . . .

## Pennsylvania Envirothon

By Craig Bingman

Photos by the Author

**C**HALLENGING young minds to enhance their environmental awareness promotes respect for our natural resources. At this year's state Envirothon, held on June 25 at Reeds Gap State Park in Mifflin County, students from 38 counties were challenged with thought provoking questions about our environment.

Blue Mountain High School, Schuylkill County, scored 418 out of a possible 500 points to take home first place medallions and an expense paid white water raft ride down the Lehigh River. Placing a close second, with 417½ points, was Franklin Regional School District, Westmoreland County. Third place medallions went to Northern Leb-

anon High School, Lebanon County, with 405 points.

The primary goal of the Envirothon is to cultivate a desire to learn more about our natural environment through competitive events. It's felt such an exposure to their natural surroundings will enable students to become more environmentally aware and active.

Pennsylvania's Envirothon evolved from two programs. First, the "Environmental Olympics," developed in 1979 by Fulton County Conservation District Manager Carolyn Hollenshead, and second, the "Envir-O-Lympics," developed in 1980 by Russ Wagner and Ruth Ann Balla, of Schuylkill and Luzerne Conservation Districts respectively. The





DAN CLARK, Juniata County WCO, above, points out mounted wildlife specimens students were asked to identify as part of the competition. Other subjects included soils, aquatics, forestry and current environmental issues.

event involves teams of students rotating through five testing stations, answering questions about wildlife, soils, aquatics, forestry and current issues.

The initial county competitions were so successful that Fulton and Schuylkill Counties initiated plans for a state competition. The first state Envir-O-Lympics." Currently, the Envirothon—renamed because of a conflict with the U.S. Olympic Committee—functions under the direction of a state steering committee made up of county conservation district staff, Bureau of Soil and Water Conservation field representatives, a representative from the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, along with several non-voting advisors.

Before a county can qualify for the state competition, a county or local competition must be held. Conservation districts spearhead these events by coordinating the Envirothon with county high schools. In addition they provide information on study materials, time schedules and regulations. Students in grades 9 through 12, from science clubs, agricultural groups, or other groups of interested students, are eligible to participate in the competition, which is usually held in mid-spring.

Each team must have no more than five members. The team, working as a unit, must rotate through the five testing stations. The team with the highest overall score wins the local competition and represents their county at the state competition.

Districts rely on cooperating agencies to assist with the five testing stations. The wildlife station, manned by Game Commission officers, may test students' knowledge on bird calls, wildlife identification, endangered species, and management techniques. The Fish Commission is in charge of the aquatics station, where questions on water quality, fishing regulations, and aquatic insect, reptile, and fish identification may be given. The Soil Conservation Service, hosting the soils station, questions the teams on soil surveys, soil profiles, and site suitability for agricultural or home use. The Bureau of Forestry is in charge of the forestry station, where students are tested on the use of the biltmore stick and given questions on the gypsy moth, timber stand improvement, and tree identification.

The subject matter and agency involvement for the current issues station is changed annually to address current environmental concerns. This year's subject, hosted by the Pennsylvania Farmer's Association and the Department of Agriculture, emphasized agri-

## ENVIROTHON STATION COURSE



cultural land preservation. In previous years, subjects covered were solid waste, acid rain, Chesapeake Bay, and water quality.

Since the introduction of the state Envirothon in 1984 involvement in the program has multiplied almost ten times. This year's local competitions reached over 2000 students from 43 counties—a substantial increase from the 236 students participating only four years ago.

Witnessing this increase in student participation and enthusiasm, the steering committee added a Friday night session to this year's agenda. The strictly voluntary program introduced 17 teams to orienteering—a problem solving course using a compass, charts, cards, and markers. The lesson plan was coordinated by the Bureau of State Parks.

Also, an educational presentation on bats was held by Calvin Butchkoski, Game Commission. After a background talk and slides, live bats were on display for the students to observe. The Friday night program ended with storytelling around a campfire by professional storytellers Bill Metzel and Jim Hamilton.

This year's awards ceremony was held in conjunction with Reeds Gap State Park's 50th Anniversary celebration. In attendance to assist with the awards presentation was Secretary of the De-

TEAMS followed a designated course from station to station, and had to work within prescribed time limits, too. Participation in the state Envirothon has grown almost ten fold since its inception in 1984.

partment of Environmental Resources, Arthur Davis; Bureau of State Parks Director William Forrey; Frank Malinzak, President of the PA Association of Conservation Districts; Bruce Holbrook, Bureau of Soil and Water Conservation; and Dr. Dean Steinhart, Office of Environmental Education.

In addition to the top three teams statewide, six regional awards were presented. Teams from Snyder, Monroe, Berks, Westmoreland, Cambria and Schuylkill counties each received an engraved plaque with their region outlined on a Pennsylvania map. All participants received an Envirothon cap and certificate.

The state competition is sponsored by the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, State Conservation Commission, Bureau of Soil and Water Conservation, cooperating agencies, organizations, businesses, and individuals. Also, every year valuable wildlife paintings, prints, and carvings by Pennsylvania artists are raffled off as an additional fund raiser. Recently, wildlife artist Ken Hunter was honored by the steering committee for his donation of 16 prints toward the Envirothon raffle.

The Envirothon has grown to the extent that other states are hosting similar competitions. In fact, the first national competition, between Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Ohio and Maryland, was held last October.

As the program continues to grow it is hoped that all 67 counties in Pennsylvania will become involved. With the amount of support and enthusiasm from students and adults alike, the Envirothon will continue to manifest in young minds the importance of their future environment.



# More Related Expenditures

THE OPENING day of buck season is an important one in Pennsylvania, but not in the way you might think. It's the day of "Happy Hunters Widows Sales" across the state. The first day of antlered deer season must be the third busiest shopping day of the year, just behind the day before and the day after Christmas. At least today seems that busy, to someone like me, here at the mall among the crowds. For days, whenever I opened a newspaper or turned on the radio, I was bombarded with imaginative ads or the sounds of rifles and of talking deer, all urging the "deer widows out there to come on in and bag a bargain." Usually I'd be in the woods on this day, but with my tag filled back in bow season, I decided to join the ranks of hunters gunning for pre-Christmas sales. Right now, as I stand in the check-out line with all the other ladies, I have plenty of time to consider this hunting inspired buying.

Somewhere I've read that the hunting and trapping sports provide more than a billion dollars a year to the Pennsylvania economy, both directly and indirectly. I don't have the exact figures at hand, at the moment I'm using both to juggle packages as I inch toward the cash register, but a billion dollars seems like a lot. Is it possible? I can imagine the obvious purchases hunters would make and economists would count, like guns and bows, ammunition and arrows, hunting clothes, motel rooms and gasoline. But what about the rest? Were the economists adding in the revenues from the "hunters widows" sales? Surely money generated here is attributable to the existence of the sport.

Glancing at the other gals in line, I take a quick inventory of the sorts of items they have chosen, to see if there is more of a hunting connection to their purchases than just their being here. More than a few of the "widows" have picked, as holiday gifts, sweatshirts and T-shirts with wildlife pictures and

slogans such as "Pennsylvania Deer Hunter." This is surprising because the department store doesn't have a sporting goods section. Someone in merchandizing has stocked the right stuff. Some of the buyers around me have selected plaid, light weight flannel shirts, fashionable in cut and meant not for the woods, but for street wear. They know the men they're buying for like to look like hunters, even when they're "off duty."

One woman in front of me lost her grip on the pile of books she was carrying. She'd made her holiday purchases heavily in that department. I help her pick them up and notice they're on hunting, shooting, reloading, wildlife and game animal field guides, camping, even outdoor humor. Another gal shifts the weight from arm to arm of a large wooden wall clock, decorated with a photo beneath layers of plastic, of a heavy-antlered buck. Some in line wait to buy bath towels with a mallard duck design, bed coverlets with flying geese, entryway rugs with peering raccoons. One woman is holding tenderly to a real find: a double globed lamp painted with a scene of a peaceful log cabin, a winter snow and a deer.

Today is the perfect time to shop for the hubbies and boyfriends who are out in the woods. But I can tell from the sizes and types of items that in some of these shoppers' families, an interest in hunting has filtered right down to the

## Another View...

by Linda Steiner

small fry. Some of the clothes with wildlife motifs are in kids' sizes. Many of the books are children's stories about wildlife and nature. The younger set, or maybe even teenagers, will be receiving these plush toys that look like deer and black bears and squirrels. A few of the gals are holding toy guns that are miniature replicas of muzzleloaders, shotguns and rifles, or are carrying toy bows and arrows.

The number of children waiting impatiently in line with mom reminds me that opening day of antlered deer is a "holiday" here in Pennsylvania, no school in many districts. Not being a native myself, this surprised me when I first moved here. A neighbor from my home town, who landed a teaching job in a rural community in northcentral Pennsylvania, was also surprised that school was closed that day. She couldn't imagine deer hunting being that important. But since then, though not a hunter herself, she's seen what it means not just to the hunting-age kids, but to the teachers and administrators as well. She says she sees a fascination with the

WHILE THE hunters are in the woods, looking for trophies like this, the "widows" are in the stores, hunting for seasonal bargains. Economists probably haven't considered many factors influenced by deer hunting in Pennsylvania.



sport and with wildlife reflected in her pupils' essays, reports, art projects and posters. I wonder if the economists who came up with the billion dollar figure added in the crayons.

To pass the time in line, I fumble in my purse for the rest of my holiday shopping list. Some items I'll have to pick up elsewhere, and there are still the outdoor magazine subscriptions to renew as gifts. I think about the employees of those publishing businesses, from editors and proof readers to copy typists and graphic artists, not to mention the landlord who gets the office rent, who owe their livelihood to the sport of hunting. At the bottom of the list is a note to get color film to take photos of the "trophies" I'd been promised would be coming home today. I wonder if there's enough money in the Christmas budget to get that special someone a telephoto lens for wildlife photography. Do Kodak and Nikon know hunting helps support them?

I also thought about the artists who produce wildlife, sporting or landscape scenes, the bird and decorative decoy carvers, gun engravers, leather carvers, jewelry designers, whose work, in varying degrees, depends on customers who are hunters.

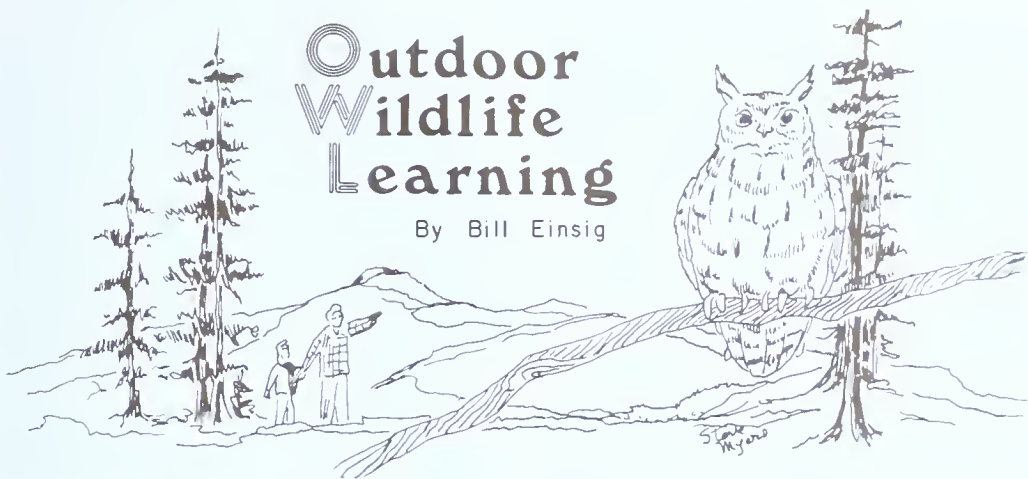
I doubt very much the billion dollar tally includes the gas I spent getting to today's sales, or the extra electricity that is being used by that whirring cash register in calculating my purchases. It does have a place in the computation because, had there not been a first day of buck season, most of the crowd would be at home or at work, instead of here spending money.

Economists add in meal expenses of hunters in figuring the sport's impact, but what about our lunches? This is a perfect chance for us "deer widows" to treat ourselves, which keeps a lot of cooks and waitresses employed with extra meals. Hm, now that I've checked out my purchases, I am getting hungry. This little in-mall restaurant looks inviting. Oh, no, another line? How long's the wait? Ah, well, chalk it up to the impact of hunting season. Doggone.



# Outdoor Wildlife Learning

By Bill Einsig



IF IT isn't already, perhaps in a few weeks our familiar landscape, so parched last summer, will lay under a blanket of snow. No other seasonal change alters so drastically the habitat for plants and animals. The life and environment of a weed patch, woodlot or mowed lawn in winter are not the same as you would find in warmer seasons.

The activities I'm going to describe are mere introductions to the new winter world that springs to life with the first snowfall. Do some exploring of your own this winter and become acquainted with snow cover from a new perspective, but keep this humbling thought in mind. While environmental changes imposed by snow cover creates, what appears to be, a new natural system, animals and plants actually meet those challenges and survive. Could we do as well?

## Looking at Snowflakes

The trick in this traditional activity is to keep the snowflake from melting long enough for you to see it. Catch the flakes on chilled, dark wool cloth or construction paper. Often, the sleeve of your coat or back of a glove works fine.

Use a hand lens for magnified viewing. A microscope can be used outside to look at flakes caught on glass slides or small pieces of cloth or paper. Remember though, anything the snowflake touches must be adequately chilled, or your beautiful snowflake will quickly turn to water. Even chilled glass microscope slides should be carried on pieces of cardboard to prevent warming by hand contact.

Snow flakes vary in shape and size. Actually, what we normally consider to be single flakes are really bunches of crystals that stick together. Even the basic snow crystals vary in general form. An

international system classifies crystal patterns into ten groups including the six-side plates and star patterns most familiar to us. Other groups are described as needles, columns, capped columns, sleet, hail and several irregularly shaped pellets.

Compare snowflake patterns from various snowfalls or at different times during the same storm. How do they compare?

Does snow keep the ground beneath warm or cold? Is ground covered with snow likely to be warmer or colder than uncovered ground?

It's often surprising to learn that snow is an effective insulator. New snow conducts heat about as well as dry wood, so the heat that is in the ground is trapped there by the fluffy snow blanket. Ground temperatures under mounds of the white stuff may hover around freezing even when air temperatures drop much lower.

At the same time, however, newly fallen snow has such high reflectivity that 80 to 90% of the sunlight striking it reflects away and thus does not warm the snow or ground underneath. As snow ages the reflectivity drops to 45 to 75% due to accumulations of dust and dirt on the snow surface and to changes in the snow surface itself as it melts and refreezes into a more solid structure.

Snow, therefore, moderates the ground temperature and prevents sudden heat gain or loss. This temperature stability is important for plant roots and small animals that live under the snow near the soil surface. Snow cover also protects wild critters from the chill and drying effects of harsh winter wind.

Investigate the insulating effects of snow by taking a series of temperature readings from the top of snow cover to the ground below. Include, too, the air tem-

perature a few inches above the snow. If taken every three or four hours over one or two days, the series of readings should indicate a more stable temperature range at the bottom of snow cover and, perhaps, a warmer temperature under the snow cover than above it.

### **Drift Structure**

I grew up learning that ten inches of snow was equal to one inch of rain, but that didn't seem to make sense all the time. Some snows were so cold and dry that they quickly piled into heaps of white fluff, while wetter heavy snows built dense layers perfect for snowball fights and sledging. The density of snow varies with atmospheric conditions, and the snow/water ratio varies as well.

Use a juice or coffee can with both ends removed to collect a snow sample. Simply press one end of the can into the snow and slice off the excess snow that protrudes from each end. Do not compact the snow into the can. Collect several samples from new snow, old snow, top of drifts and bottom of drifts for comparison.

You can calculate a snow/water ratio in several ways. Two are very easy. If you transfer the snow in the collecting can to an identical can with the bottom intact, you can compare the depth of the snow in the can to that of the resulting meltwater. If you don't have identical cans, measure the volume of the collecting can and then measure the volume of the meltwater. Both methods are easy to do in the kitchen or classroom.

### **The Drippy Snowball**

Youngsters will enjoy this surprising demonstration of melting snow. Make a large snowball and suspend it from a string, or impale it on a pencil, over a pan in a heated room. How soon will the first drop of meltwater fall from the snowball? Which would yield a drop of water first, a snowball or an ice cube? (Even hard snowballs contain many air spaces which hold meltwater as the snow melts. As a result, you might wait an hour or more for that first drop!)

### **Animal Snow Homes**

If you study old layers of encrusted snow near a woodland edge, fencerow or grassy field, you're likely to find many animal tracks and holes leading to tunnels underneath. Such signs often yield interesting facts about the animals that made them.

Several years ago I studied the temperatures inside a bluebird box occupied by wintering white-footed mice. I noticed the ground around the post was well traveled by the mice, and that it was fairly easy to trace the meandering paths through the nearby tangle of multiflora rose, honeysuckle, and bittersweet. The mice in that box, at that time, foraged only about 15 feet from the nest box. How that distance changed through the winter, or from one box to another, is a question I haven't yet explored.

Meadow voles often construct intricate runway networks under snow. When snow covers soil for some time, the soil is usually slightly warmer than the snow. This temperature difference causes water vapor to migrate from the soil into the bottom snow layer where it condenses and freezes into large crystals with much open space between. This subnivean (under snow) space is easy for burrowing animals to penetrate.

Locate a tunnel entrance and try to follow the runway by carefully excavating the snow. If you prefer not to disturb the tunnels, place various kinds of food near the entrance and monitor what gets eaten, when it was eaten, and how much was eaten.

### **Dress For Winter**

If you work with children, don't overlook an invigorating outdoor study of snow this winter. However, be certain the children are well prepared for the cold temperatures and wind conditions they are likely to encounter. Hats, warm gloves and boots are essential not only to safeguard the youngsters' health, but also to ensure attention and cooperation during the activity itself.

Unfortunately, many students arrive at school, even in mid-winter, poorly prepared to spend even 30 minutes outdoors. If this is your problem, it would be wise to alert students and their parents a day or two in advance of the outdoor activity that hats, gloves and boots will be needed.

### **Opportunity Lost**

Snow is an accepted part of our life in Pennsylvania and throughout temperate zones. It's with us for only a limited time each year and provides us with limited opportunities to study its effects. Take advantage of this phenomenon this winter. Remember, it is not available at all for much of the world population.



**H**ERE IT IS, December already. It's hard to believe another year has gone by. During the year I've related some of my experiences as a wildlife conservation officer. If you've been reading along, you know (at least I think you do) many humorous things happen to those of us in this business. No day is the same: one day we may be working with kids; the next, we're trying to handle somebody who wants to take our head off.

Another task of a WCO is writing Field Notes. What's the first thing you read when you get your copy of the **GAME NEWS**? If you're like me and most other subscribers, it's the "Field Notes." When talking about **GAME NEWS**, people will always make some kind of statement about "Field Notes." Officers who have something interesting or humorous happen during the month are to write it as a Field Note and submit it with their monthly reports. People in my district seem to keep track of my Field Notes. They'll say, "You haven't had a Field Note in the **GAME NEWS** lately," or, "Your last Field Note was funny."

I write a Field Note almost every month. But for many reasons—space, mostly, timeliness and subject matter, too—not every Field Note appears in the magazine. So, for my last column, I'm going to get even with the **GAME NEWS** editor by giving you some of my Field Notes that never made it to the magazine. Nothing like a second chance!

On the first day of buck season Trainee Skubish and I stopped to check a deer hunter. He was up on a steep bank, kneeling down with his back towards us. He had a fluorescent orange vest on, but no hunting license. As Trainee Skubish approached the hunter the man stood up and turned around. As soon as he saw us he began frantically waving his arms. My first thought was that he was watching some deer and didn't want us to scare them. But then the tree he was standing beside started to move. I sat in the car, helpless, as the tree fell across the hood of my vehicle.

The guy was not hunting but cutting firewood. And because it was deer season, he had decided to wear fluorescent orange. He also blamed the incident on me because I had stopped. (Everyone's a comedian.)

Another day I stopped at Mt. Pisgah



**By Bill Bower**

**Wildlife Conservation Officer  
Bradford County**

State Park. I overheard one Youth Conservation Corp worker, Walt McCord, tell another youth worker, Frank Monroe, "Let's take up a collection and hire a deer poacher to come here so officer Bower has something to do." Funny, boys. Very funny.

All Game Protectors get strange phone calls. Just prior to the 1976 deer season, I received one that went something like this:

"Hello, Game Commission."

Is this the Game Warden?"

"Yes, it is."

"Hey, could you tell me if the Camp Meat Law is still in effect?"

Camp Meat Law?"

"Yeah, you know, the one that lets a group shoot an extra deer for camp meat."

"There never was such a law to my knowledge."

"There wasn't?"

"No! Who am I talking to?"

Oh-oh!" **CLICK!**

Then there's the one many of us can relate to.

After hunting deer for 13 years, Jim Rutkowski, Erie, finally got his first buck, only 30 minutes after the start of the season. As his cousin Dave Rutkowski walked up to congratulate Jim, the only comment Jim had to make was, "Now

what the heck am I going to do with \$3 worth of candy bars?"

Here's one on excuses:

The other day my wife received a phone call from a mother who wanted a hunter education course for her son. It was late in the year and all the classes had been given. My wife asked why the boy had not taken the course earlier. The woman said she wasn't aware of any courses. My wife explained that the Commission advertised the courses on TV, radio, and in the newspapers. The woman's answer was that they had no electricity, so they had no TV or radio, and that they didn't get a newspaper. For added measure, the woman said, "We don't even have running water in the house."

Oh well, she can just add another "no" to her list, because there are no more hunter education courses this year.

"I now pronounce you man and wife."

My wife is used to the many strange requests Game Protectors receive. The other day, when she answered the door, there stood a young man with two broken arms. He stated he wanted the Game Protector. My wife asked why. Well, he wanted to get married. There was a woman sitting in the car. He said he had to get married today because it was the last day their wedding license would be valid. My wife finally got things straightened out. The young man was looking for the Justice of the Peace, but as it was Saturday, he was not in his office. Someone then sent him to the Game Protector, thinking I would know where the J.P. was. I must have slept through that part of the training at the Training School. Now let's see, "Err, do you take this woman to be . . .?"

Dreams do come true.

The other night one of my regularly recurring dreams came true. A deputy and I were sitting in a wooded area, watching for jacklighters. A car drove by, pulled into the lane we were parked along, and drove within 50 yards of us before stopping. Two men got out, opened the trunk, took out an illegal deer, and started to field-dress it. The deputy and I got out of our vehicle,

walked over, and arrested them. (Oh, the looks on their faces!)

Deer season gets some hunters very excited. I checked one hunter who had forgotten his coat. I received another call from another hunter who had forgotten his license. One made a special trip back home for his rifle, only to get back to deer camp to discover he had forgotten his ammunition. Will you wives and mothers PLEASE check these hunters before sending them to deer camp? Make sure they have all their equipment.

I thought I had problems:

I heard a report on the radio that Wildlife Officers in Tanganyika are confronted with really big problems. It seems elephants had been eating wild berries and grapes and were getting intoxicated from them. Elephant fights and elephants charging automobiles and people are just a few of the complaints registered. I'll take rabbits in the garden anytime.

Well, thanks for the second chance to share some of my Field Notes with you.

Before I finish, I'd like to thank two persons; Chel Harshbarger and Jared Wilcox. Chel typed all these columns. If I had to do the typing, they never would have been completed. Jared, an English teacher in Canton School District and also a Deputy Game Protector, made sure all the "Ts" were crossed and all the "Is" dotted.

Now I would like to turn to a more serious vein. I've really enjoyed my job these past 20 years. Many things have changed, and this job is no exception. In fact, even I've changed. Being nearly 50 years old, I can no longer go 20 to 30 hours without sleep. And now, when I'm awakened in the middle of the night, I don't fall easily right back to sleep. I hope the new people coming on as Wildlife Conservation Officers will think of the duties we face as a way of life, not just another job.

I also hope the people in charge will realize the unique situation we're in and not try to make a "job" out of a "way of life." Regardless of what changes may lie ahead, however, one thing will never change—my pride in being a Pennsylvania wildlife conservation officer.



# Thornapples



*Chuck Fergus*

**P**ERHAPS it's been luck as much as skill or good management that has seen me kill six bucks in the last six deer seasons. They've not been monsters, by any means: a rather ordinary 8-point, a forkhorn, and four spikes. But how good they did taste.

When all is said and done, venison is my favorite meat. Ground venison for chili, stews, stroganoff, meatloaf, burgers. Venison chops and steaks. The venison "fish"—the pair of small tenderloins lying against the underside of the backbone: exquisitely tender, savory meat.

Nor am I alone in my appreciation of this fine wild protein. My wife loves venison, although it wasn't always that way. She grew up in the suburbs of Philadelphia and had never tasted deer meat until she met me. Venison tenderloin and stuffed mushrooms. She wasn't at all sure she would like this exotic stuff. Venison strips stir-fried with broccoli and scallions. Wasn't deer meat tough? Venison steaks grilled over charcoal. Stringy? Venison fondue. Gamey-tasting? Venison chops slapped in a skillet, seared in butter, flipped, allowed to cook until just rare, then snatched from the fire dripping juice, so tender you can cut it with a table knife.

Now, when deer season is upon us and I talk about holding out, hunting all season in hopes of bagging a trophy buck, she gets worried. "Hadn't you just better shoot the first buck you see? I mean, you may only get one chance."

"I've got a doe tag."

"Yes, but you've told me yourself, a hunter can hunt hard in doe season and never see a deer."

"That's possible."

"Well, think about it."

I half expect her to come out with the crusty old pothunter's aphorism: "Cain't eat the horns."

When I have a deer down, the work begins. Careful, exacting work, because what I do in the next several hours, and in the next several days, will have a large impact on how the meat tastes.

First, field dressing. I won't go into the task in great detail, but will refer the beginning hunter—or the person who bags an occasional deer and would like to brush up on his or her technique—to an illustrated reprint article, "Venison Needn't Be 'Pot Luck,'" available free from the Game Commission.\*

For field dressing I prefer a knife with a narrow blade about four inches long. The narrow blade lets me cut around the rectum and the urethra of the deer, freeing these waste-carrying tubes where they exit the abdominal cavity via a tunnel-like hole through the pelvis. The rectum/urethra can then be drawn back into the abdominal cavity and discarded with the intestines. If the tubes are simply sliced through, as some hunters do it, feces and urine are released into the body cavity, tainting the meat. Getting things just right isn't always easy; it took me several deer to get the hang of cleanly removing these channels.

When possible, I try to shoot my deer through the lungs, behind the shoulders. It's a quick, humane kill, the deer bleeds out rapidly and thoroughly, and little meat is ruined. In the heat of the hunt, however, my bullet doesn't always hit this ideal location.

Two years ago, in bitter cold on the last day of the season, I shot at a trotting spike buck about 125 yards away. When I found the deer, it was dead. The bullet had struck a little too far back, angling through the liver and the front of the paunch. When I opened the carcass, I found a terrible mess: stomach fluid and

bits of half-digested browse scattered through the cavity.

I cleaned out the deer as best I could, then dragged it home and hung it. I quickly unrolled a garden hose—and found the hose full of ice. It took a while to break up the ice and flush it out, but then I was able to wash out the body cavity thoroughly. The venison, I'm glad to report, tasted just fine.

### Open Carcass Fully

After my deer is hanging, I open the carcass fully. First I saw or chop through the "aitch bone," the pelvic arch through which the rectum and urethra passed. Then I extend my field-dressing opening up through the rib cage, cutting with a knife alongside the breastbone, where the ribs consist of cartilage; then on up the neck to the jaw. I remove the remaining portions of the windpipe and gullet. I prop the carcass open with sticks, and it cools quickly and completely.

Ideally, a freshly killed deer should be hung for two or three days before butchering. This period allows enzymes present in the meat to slightly break down the tissue, tenderizing it. However, conditions must be just right: temperatures in the high twenties, thirties, or low forties. If the weather is warmer, bacteria may cause the meat to spoil. And if it's too cold, the meat will freeze—thawed

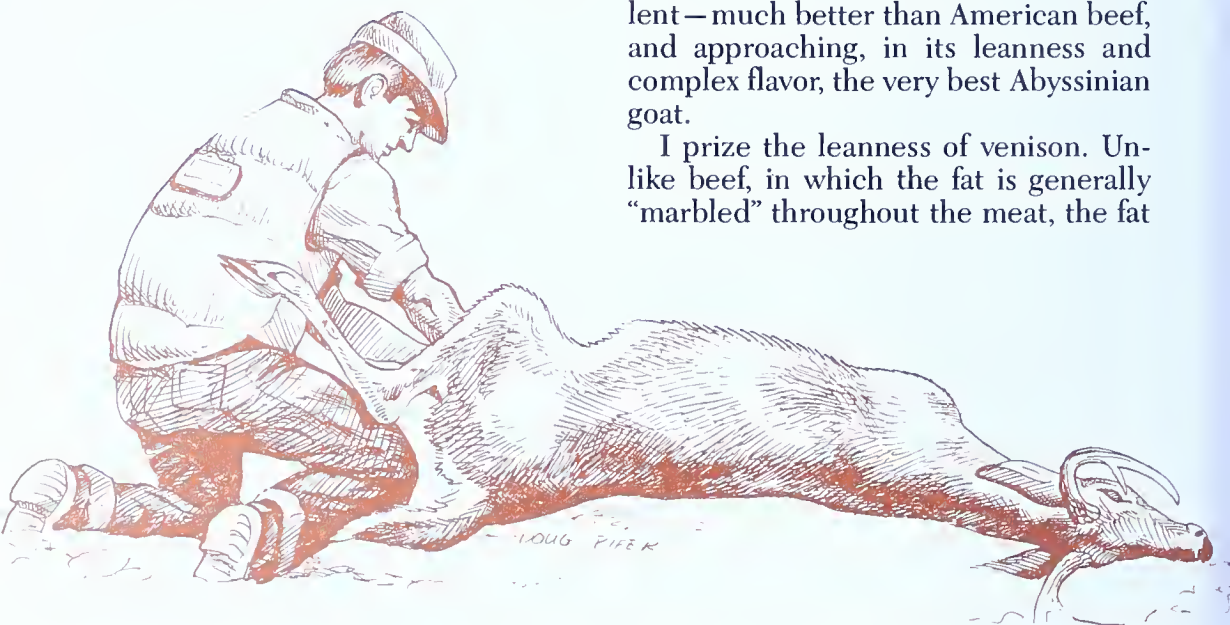
for cutting, and then refrozen, its texture will suffer.

One year I hunted out of a cabin at World's End State Park, in Sullivan County. All through the day—the first day of buck season—the temperature plummeted. By nightfall it was almost down to zero. Driving home the next day, I saw deer hanging from meat poles outside of camps, and wondered how many people would dine on those kills and pronounce venison an inferior meat. Had I killed a buck that first day, I would have hung it inside our cabin (despite any protests of my hunting partners), where, thanks to a balky woodstove, the ambient temperature approximated that of a commercial meat cooler.

If the weather doesn't allow me to hang my deer, I truck it off to a commercial meat-cutting operation as soon as possible. I used to cut up my own deer, but lately I've been getting lazy and taking it to the butcher. His power meat saw does a neater job than I ever could, and in a much shorter time. Yes, I pay a little bit, but a fraction of the cost of an equivalent amount of beef. When I bring the meat home—wrapped to my specifications—I will sometimes let it age for a day or two in the refrigerator before freezing.

I once served venison to a friend from Ethiopia, who pronounced it excellent—much better than American beef, and approaching, in its leanness and complex flavor, the very best Abyssinian goat.

I prize the leanness of venison. Unlike beef, in which the fat is generally "marbled" throughout the meat, the fat





on venison is largely confined to discrete areas: on top of the loin, intermingled with the organs in the body cavity, and on the outer surfaces of major muscles. Before cooking a cut of venison, I remove the fat and discard it, along with any connective tissue—sticky, clear tissue that bonds the muscles together. What's left is lean, red meat.

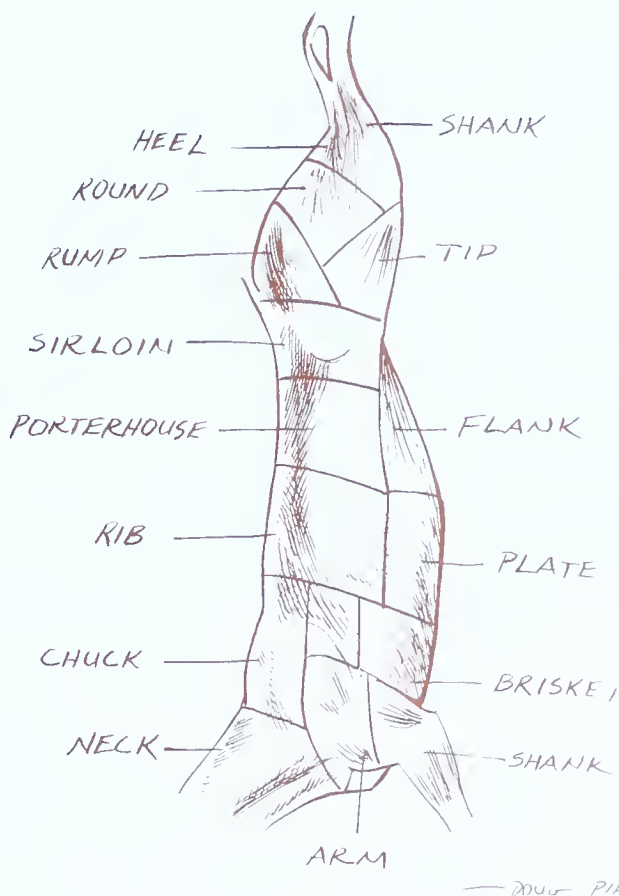
The very best way to prepare venison is also the simplest. Just cook it, and cook it rare. Over charcoal, in the broiler pan, or on top of the stove. I often use a cast-iron skillet, with a little butter or good-quality cooking oil to make up for the absence of fat. Salt and pepper, a few drops of Worcestershire sauce. . . . The meat pink on the inside, tender, dripping.

The other evening I got distracted while cooking a couple of steaks; too late, I speared them from the skillet. They were, I would judge, "medium well done." And they were tough.

I believe many cooks are slightly afraid of venison, suspicious of it as "wild meat." Who knows what parasites it may harbor?, thinks the cautious cook. (In fact, it is probably among the most healthful of meats, free of parasites, untainted by chemical additives to protect health or stimulate growth.) The cautious cook cooks the venison until it is well done—then cooks it a little longer, for safety's sake. Of course, the steaks turn out tough. And if the meat wasn't handled carefully in the first place, with a disagreeable flavor.

As red meat goes, that from a young whitetail buck is hard to beat. I have had excellent beef—not fatty, feedlot beef pushed to market weight on grain, but beef raised on grass for several years, then grained up gradually to the slaughter—and it was delicious. Elk meat: lean and superb. I even had buffalo once, and found it tender and quite tasty. But day in and day out, I prefer venison. Deer of the year is good, but the texture is not yet firm enough to be exemplary. Give me instead a young buck, a two- or three-year-old that's had time to grow a bit, whose flesh is firm and mature of taste.

The best cut is the tenderloin. In addition to the "fish," there are two larger loins on a deer, long muscles running along the back above the ribs, one on either side of the spine. They can be cut as chops, in which case a small handle of bone will be attached; or as "butterfly steaks," short cylinders of meat cut partway through the middle, then opened like the wings of butterflies.



Steaks are only slightly less ambrosial. About an inch thick seems to be perfect. It depends on the heat of your skillet, but two minutes per side (and don't be afraid to cut into the steak to check) should yield a fine, rare piece of meat.

I'm not a big fan of roasts—I usually have the butcher grind the neck and front shoulders in with the rest of the scraps, because I really prize ground venison. Venison imparts a special

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## GAME NEWS

For a Friend . . .

tanginess to burgers, stroganoff, chili, meatloaf, and a score of other dishes calling for ground meat. (Venison meatloaf should be cooked on the rare side for maximum flavor and juiciness.)

This year I plan to expand my venison repertoire—assuming, of course, that I'm fortunate enough to continue my streak and secure the year's meat. One

recipe I'm looking forward to trying is Venison-Heart Barley Soup With Onions and Bay Leaves. Then, from the wealth of recipes in the *Pennsylvania Wild Game Cookbook*, (\$4)\* something exotic like Scallopine of Venison, Venison Al Vino Rosso Piquant, or Venison Steak in Mushroom Gravy.

However, knowing me, I'll probably stick mainly to Venison Au Naturel. It's simple, quick, and always—especially if I'm careful not to overcook it—vastly better than good.

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\*From Department AR, Pennsylvania Game Commission, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.

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## Books in Brief . . .

(Order from publisher, not from Game Commission)

**The L. L. Bean Guide to Outdoor Photography**, by Lefty Kreh, Random House, Inc., 20 E. 50th St., New York City 10022, 202 pp., \$16.95. Good photos make outdoor activities memorable forever, for friends and strangers as well as for those who went. Unfortunately, most of us are poor photographers. Some are good, a few are great. Lefty Kreh is a longtime member of the select. Truth is, nobody is better at this business than Lefty, and in this book he tells and shows us how it's done. All the technical stuff is here, of course, but that's only part of the big picture, if you don't mind a bad pun. This book is full of little insights and analyses which will help in countless ways, perhaps most of all in helping us to understand what makes the difference between a "nice" picture and a great one—and how to get more of the latter.

**Woodcock Shooting**, by Steve Smith, Stackpole Books, Cameron and Kelker Streets, Harrisburg, Pa. 17105, 144 pp., \$17.45. The thing about Steve Smith's writing is that it's satisfying. You read it and you know he's been there. He's hunted the soggy-leaved drizzly days as well as the wine colored ones. So if he tells you the woodcock is our finest bird, you know his arguments will have merit even if you disagree. The bird stuff is here, and the dog and the gun stuff. Steve knows guns and how to use them—as shown by his preference for a short-barreled side-by-side 16-gauge Parker when it's time to head for the aspen thickets—and he knows how to hunt woodcock. All of which means that this is a book any upland hunter will enjoy and profit from.

**The Private Lives of Animals**, by Roger Caras, McGraw Hill Book Co., 11 W. 19th St., NYC 10011, 223 pp., \$12.95. A dazzling array of photographs portraying wild animals in their natural environments make this an excellent coffee table book for all lovers of our natural world.

**The Shotgunner's Bible**, by George Laycock, and **The Rifleman's Bible**, by Sam Fadala, Doubleday & Co., Inc., 245 Park Avenue, NYC 10167, 176 pp., \$7.95, each, paperbound. A history of shotgun development, rundown on models currently available, and then chapters on gauge, sights, stocks and barrels make this a comprehensive guide to a most versatile tool. Skeet, trap and other shooting games are followed by the use of shotguns on game from quail to deer. The Rifleman's Bible covers the development of rifles, actions, cartridges, reloading, sights and sighting-in, firearm care and much more. Two good basic books.



Extra emphasis on . . .

# Snow Shots

By Keith C. Schuyler

ASIDE FROM the first-time bow hunters still trying for a deer when the snow flies, odds are that an increased number of veteran archers will be trying to fill a tag after Christmas this year. For some, those who've already taken one deer, their tags will be the Game Commission's new bonus tag.

It will be a new experience for many. For, in past years, it was not unusual for the archer who didn't score in the regular October season to fill his tag during one of the regular firearms seasons.

This December, in addition to the die-hard bow benders like myself, who stay with the stick and string exclusively, there are certain to be more archers afield. Even those who scored on one deer in one of the previous seasons, but hold a bonus tag, will be permitted to take an antlerless deer. The archery tag permits a hunter to take any deer, but a bow hunter who has already filled his regular tag may take only an antlerless animal on the bonus tag. Of course, if no deer have been taken, the archer with a bonus tag is entitled to any deer on his archery tag, but is still limited to an antlerless animal on his bonus license.

Under *no circumstances* is a hunter permitted *two* antlered deer in the 1988-89 seasons.

Now that legal logistics are settled, let's get back to the weather. It is not unusual to have snow during firearms seasons, but at that time most archers are carrying rifles. I recall being caught wearing sneakers during a freak October archery season snow storm, but we can discount such happenings. Of course, we don't always have a white Christmas. But anyone who hunts that extra season can count on snow—and frequently low temperatures—for part, if not all of it. In fact, the weather is



THIS YEAR will undoubtedly find more bowmen afield in the late season, many taking advantage of bonus deer tags. As many will discover, archery hunting at this time of year is a whole new ball game.

always a tossup; some days are so bad that even I stay home—to write, of all things.

For an archer to write authoritatively on hunting in the snow acknowledges that he must frequently fail in the October seasons. I qualify. Persistence however, has paid off on a number of occasions, including both the antlered and antlerless gunning seasons.

Clothing is an important consideration at this time of year. No longer can you have the unincumbered comfort of

October that permits anything from shirt sleeves to a light camouflage suit. Modern fabrics permit warmth without the customary bulk of prior days, but clothing made from them is expensive. You may wish to wear the wool jackets and pants that sustained you through the earlier, firearms seasons.

Regardless of what type of clothing you wear, shooting practice while wearing it is important. The arm guard you may find necessary to compress loose fitting garments in warm weather, in addition to protecting you from the bow string, may now become equally important in compressing bulky jacket sleeves. There is no easier way to foul up a shot than by having the bow string catch on clothing. Check also for projecting buttons or bunched wrinkles to prevent interference with the string. Pockets, handy for storage, can be hazardous to your accuracy if the flaps protrude beyond the contour of your jacket.

Relative to camouflage clothing itself, when the woods are white, it's a new game. This all important item of October archery hunting is much less effective when stark trees break up the white monotony and provide a clue as to the best defense against the deer's keen vi-

## STRAIGHT FROM THE BOWSTRING

sion. I wear black, or the darkest clothing available. There will be times, when you are standing against evergreen boughs, that you might wish for the old green blotched suit, but if you don't move, you can be just another tree stump. If you still prefer camouflage, tree bark patterns are probably the best bet at this time. There are several: Treebark, Realbark and Shadowbark.

By the same token, both facial and hand camouflage can be important. Again, black, or something dark. If you are trying to blend into the protective bark of a large tree, exposed parts of your anatomy can be a giveaway unless they match your attire.

This is one reason that all-white clothing has questionable value in snow-covered Pennsylvania. Every moment is telegraphed against tree trunks or naked bushes.

Keep in mind that, even though visibility appears much better when all the foliage is gone, your shooting limitations do not change. To be effective you must still get that deer within *your* range. As in all seasons of the year, movement is more likely to reveal you to the animal than any other factor, regardless of what you are wearing. Actually, because of the angle of the sun, there is less light than in earlier seasons, but reflected from the snow, it appears brighter. And when the sun is behind clouds, frequent in winter, the woods become a pattern of mostly blacks and whites.

Headgear, of course, should match as nearly as possible your major attire. This is sometimes a problem when it is very

**EVEN A light snow—and a companion—is an advantage when the time comes for dragging a whitetail out of the woods, and during the late season there's a fairly good chance some will be on the ground.**





cold, but if it is necessary to wear a pull-down hat, try a dark one.

Footgear, although all important, is no problem as long as it keeps your feet warm and is comfortable. If it is covered by the length of your trousers, the lower parts won't show. They will be buried by snow and are no visual problem in any event.

Camouflaging arrow fletching is more a problem. White feathers or plastic, easily seen when foliage is heavy, are like little flags easily detected by deer. Yet they do help mark the arrow's flight and make arrows easier to find if they miss. In winter, we have the opposite conditions. My preference is for a bright orange cock feather (which appears gray to deer) and two other dark ones, regardless of woodland conditions. You can't have everything.

Most bow camouflage is satisfactory for snow conditions. Even if it doesn't quite match your attire, its conformation is such that a bow could be just another tree limb or branch to a deer. Unless, of course, it is waved around when there is no air stirring.

If you must go it alone in winter, be sure someone knows where you're going. It is possible to become lost if a sudden snow storm or fog moves into your area, even if you know the territory fairly well. There is always the possibility of getting a vehicle stuck, wherein companions are especially welcome. A compass should always be a part of your equipment; more so in winter. Getting lost may result only in embarrassment, but there is a potential hazard to your life if you are off the beaten path.

This is especially true if you use a tree stand. Wet snow can become ice if the temperature changes. An easy climb may become a hazardous descent. There is always a certain danger in using either a permanent or a portable tree stand. It multiplies in winter.

**AS SCHUYLER** knows from firsthand experience, dark clothing can be the best camouflage when snow is covering the ground. Dark face and hand cream will complete the effect.

## **GAMEcooking Tips**

For a native American dinner, serve with Scuppernong wine.

### **Indian Venison**

4 to 6-pound venison roast

1 cup maple syrup

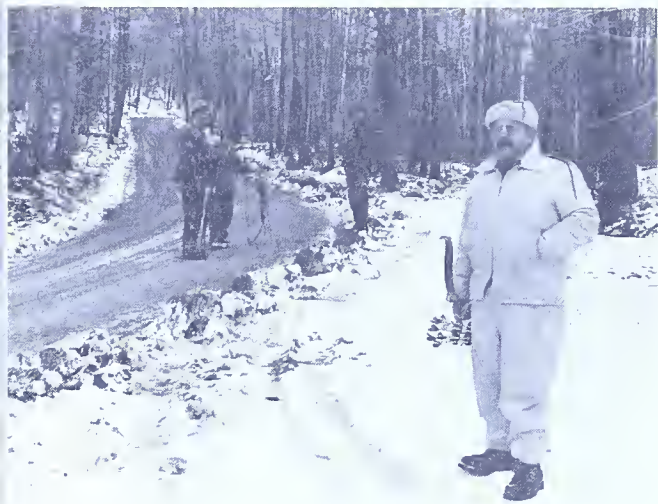
Marinate the roast in the syrup at room temperature for four hours. Cover and refrigerate for two days, turning twice a day. Roast in syrup covered in slow oven (250°) for three hours or until tender.

This is a traditional recipe. Native Americans, who loved maple sugar and maple syrup, enjoyed their venison exactly this way. Champlain found them using this method in the 17th century. Indian children loved to trickle the hot golden syrup onto the snow and eat it, just as New England children do to this day. Easy. Serves 4-6.

—FROM WILD GAME COOKERY  
BY CAROL VANCE WARY

Actually, the odds of a solitary archer connecting diminish as the weather worsens. Deer that have been hunted for a number of weeks are edgy. Chances improve substantially if you hunt with a group. You can drive deer to





**FLUORESCENT ORANGE** suit, right, presumably shows up as gray to a deer's eyes, so regular firearms season apparel is certainly appropriate in the late archery season, too.

have additional help, which is especially important if the deer drops in rough terrain. The holidays are a good time to get a group together. People seem to have more time then, and many are free from work.

There are advantages to a winter hunt. Usual snow cover can make dragging an animal much easier, but deep snow can have the opposite affect. There is no worry about carcass spoilage as temperatures are well within safe limits. The weather is at best, invigorating; at worst, stay homeable.

one another. You have the added advantage of ready assistance, if you down a deer, plus the fellowship that goes with sharing the hunt. In the event it takes a bit of searching to find an animal, you

If you don't score this year, there is always the possibility of an early January thaw in 1989.

---

When Food and Cover employee Bob Spang, center, and his wife Kathy became 4-H leaders, about five years ago, they probably never imagined their daughters would become top notch shooters, but they have. Carol, 17 years old, won first place honors this year in the NRA's state Intermediate Junior Olympics Pistol Championship, and then won the 4-H Senior Division Air Pistol Championship. She's also garnered many second and third place awards since joining the 4-H shooting program in 1985. Jolene, right, 12 years old, took first place in the state Sub-Junior Air Pistol Championships this year, and then went to Colorado Springs, Colorado, and took top national honors. That earned her an invitation to the U.S. Shooting Team tryouts, but she and her family were unable to make the trip to California.







ALTHOUGH 30-caliber cartridges have been overwhelmingly popular among deer hunters for nearly a century, there's a lot to be said for the slightly smaller 284s.

Two cartridges designed for the deer hunter . . .

## REMINGTON'S 7MM-08 & 280

By Don Lewis

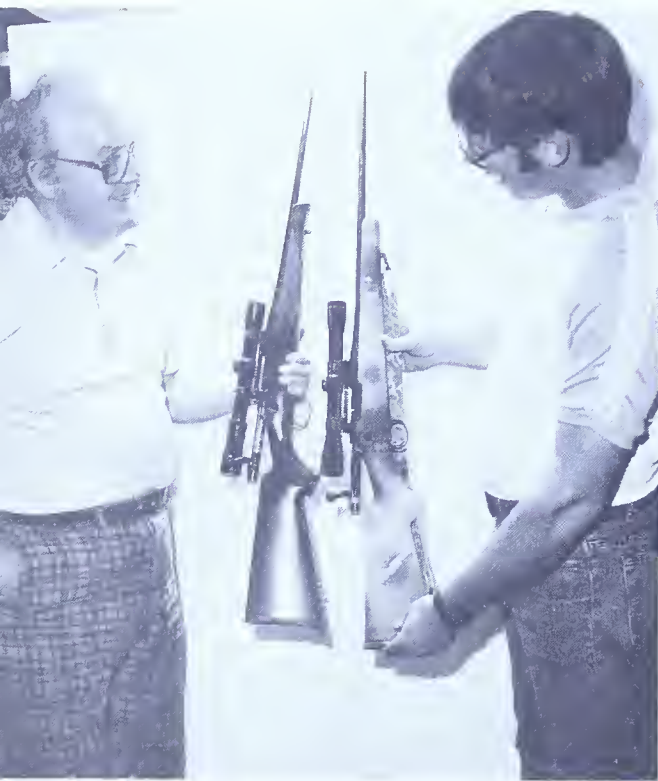
Photos by Helen Lewis

THE BUCK season had been a disaster. My work schedule permitted only a few hours of hunting on opening day, the first Saturday went down the drain to an assortment of problems too numerous to mention, and the last Saturday found me wrapped in a case of the flu. The sweating, hacking and coughing warned every deer within a mile of me. I never saw a tail.

The first day of antlerless season was almost a repetition of the last day of buck season. By 3:30, I was fatigued, weak and disgusted. I consoled myself with the idea that the next day would

turn the tide in my direction. Slinging the new outfit on my shoulder, I hadn't gone a dozen steps when a doe bounded directly at me. It's surprising how fast a hunter can forget aches and discomforts when legal game appears.

When the doe stopped for an instant, I began the trigger pull, only to see her jump out of the scope's field of view. I swung, picked up the moving deer and fired. A miss. My second shot also missed. When the doe topped a slight ravine some 60 yards distant, I got off the third shot and it connected. The 140-grain 284-caliber bullet struck the



**STOCKMAKER** Jim Peightal, Ernest, shows Lewis a custom 7mm-08 in a Brown Precision, Inc., fiberglass stock. For comparison, Don's holding a Remington Model Seven chambered for the same caliber.

rear of the left side of the ribcage and came out in back of the right shoulder. It would have been a stopper with practically any centerfire bullet, but it was an appropriate finale for all the range shooting I had done with my Model 788 Remington 7mm-08.

The 30 caliber—actual bullet diameter is .308—has dominated the deer woods in Pennsylvania, and literally around the nation, since early 1895, when the 30-30 was introduced by Winchester. This rimmed case was popular from the start, but serious competition arrived in 1906, when the 30-06 saw the light of day. In 1921, Savage introduced their 300 Savage, which is about midway in power between the 30-30 and the 30-06. Then in 1952, Winchester brought out the 308 Winchester in the Model 88 lever action outfit. We can even step back to 1891, when the 7.62 x 54R Russian, which is a slightly oversize 308 caliber, was born. During World War I, Remington, Winchester and New England Westinghouse all produced Mosin-Nagant Model 91s for the Russians. Many of the rifles were sold to the American public.

There are many other 30s but these are enough to show this caliber has enjoyed a long period of popularity with Pennsylvania big game hunters. In fact, all of the cartridges mentioned are still being used by many Keystone State deer and bear hunters. The 30-30 is still a favorite with new and younger hunters. According to a *GAME NEWS* survey, the 30-06 is being used by over one-third of Pennsylvania's big game hunters, while the 30-30 commands almost 16 percent and the 308 close to 10 percent.

When statistics show the 30 caliber firmly holds the first three spots on our deer rifle popularity list and the venerable 270 Winchester came in fourth, why am I making a fuss about two 284-caliber cartridges?

It's not my intent to ignore the potential of any of these 30-caliber cartridges. Hunting history reveals that each has made a generous contribution to the Pennsylvania hunter. Neither am I trying to induce the 6mm clan to abandon its belief in the 243-caliber bullet. I'm only interested in showing that the 284 caliber, especially in the 7mm-08 and 280 Remington cartridges, has distinct benefits for a large segment of deer hunters who prefer calibers smaller than 30. From a pure ballistic standpoint, the 284 caliber effectively uses bullet weights a considerable distance above the normal 105-grain limit of the 6mm's. It's true that in a 26-inch barrel the Winchester 243 or Remington 6mm can top 3000 fps muzzle velocity with a 100-grain bullet. But in 24-inch barrels the 7mm-08 can hit 3000 fps at the muzzle with a 120-grain bullet, and the 280 Remington can easily shove the 120-grain slug past that mark.

As long as there is a stump left, I'll be advocating that shooting should be a pleasant experience, not a test of endurance. Shooting a cartridge that kicks



THE 7mm-08, left, and the 280 Remington, right, flank the ever popular 30-06. Most shooters will find the slightly smaller calibers make for more enjoyable shooting, which can only improve success in the deer woods.

like a mine mule is not conducive to long practice sessions. No one, myself included, likes to be jarred from head to toes with recoil. We must accept the fact that recoil is a part of the shooting game, but we should attempt to minimize it as much as possible. Dropping down from the '06, say, to a highly efficient medium-size cartridge such as the Remington 7mm-08 is a step in the right direction, not only for youngsters and lady hunters, but for any hunter who finds heavy recoil objectionable.

Notice that I called the 7mm-08 a medium-size cartridge. That's exactly what it is. It has to be classified as a medium-capacity case. Now, this doesn't detract from it. In fact, it really should be a prime inducement for thousands of hunters, both male and female, to take a second look at this spectacular 284-caliber cartridge.

Doubtless the Winchester 243, with its high velocity and low recoil, can claim credit for enticing thousands of deer hunters away from the 30-caliber cartridges that dominated our deer woods for decades. The survey showed the 243 ranked fifth in popularity. Remington's 6mm and Weatherby's 240 Magnum are two more 6mm's that replaced a lot of the old standbys. But there has often been a penetration problem with this caliber, even with a 100-grain bullet, when it contacted hard bones and tough muscles in big white-tails and black bear. The 6mm cartridge is often referred to as a combination varmint and big game load, but it has



failed often in the latter category, perhaps because some hunters used bullets intended for woodchucks instead of big game. I'm quick to point out that some 6mm bullets are primarily designed for deer hunting. Handloaders will find those of 100 grains or more from Speer, Hornady and Nosler, for example, will give deep penetration and controlled expansion, as will factory loads in the heaviest bullet weights. The important thing is not to use varmint bullets for deer or bear.

### Varmint Accuracy

While I have always thought the 6mm's were basically varmint-type cartridges, I don't want to imply that the Remington 7mm-08 is unsuitable for anything other than medium-size big game. With a 115-grain Speer or Hornady's and Sierra's 120-grain bullets, the 7mm-08 offers the handloader varmint accuracy in Remington's Model 700 BDL heavy barrel varmint special.

Remington introduced the 7mm-08 in their now discontinued Model 788. This was a strong, comparatively inexpensive, detachable magazine outfit with an 18½-inch barrel. I like a detachable magazine far better than a hinged floorplate setup. However, I don't like protruding magazines, and the Model 788 failed in that category. Also, a paramount requisite for any detachable magazine is an easy-to-use and positive release. The 788 didn't exactly fail on





USING A Oehler P35 chronograph with Ill Skyscreen system and a Remington Model 700, Darrel Lewis finds the 280 Remington to be not just a fine deer cartridge, but a fine varmint one, too. (Note the Millet mounts with open sights on top.)

this point, but it didn't receive high marks from me, either. Its trigger was on the heavy side, but you can't have everything in an economy-type rifle. I have misplaced the results of my range shooting with the Model 788 test rifle, but I remember it did very well, easily qualifying for big game use, and a couple of deer fell to it, too.

### Hornady Handbook

The *Hornady Handbook of Cartridge Reloading*, 3rd edition, shows the 7mm-08 has a maximum velocity of 2600 fps with the 139-grain spire point. Speer's No. 11 *Reloading Manual* gives a sizzling 2756 fps with their 145-grain boattail spitzer. The advertised velocity of Remington's 140-grain factory round is 2860 fps. *Hodgdon Powder Data Manual*, 25th edition, shows a max load of H414 gives a muzzle velocity of 2807.

There appears to be some confusion, with these wide variations in velocities. The Model 788 has an 18½-inch barrel,

so velocities from it would be somewhat lower than those taken in longer barrels. Remington's velocity readings, for instance, came from a 24-inch barrel.

The addition of a new 120-grain hollow point loading to both the 7mm-08 and the 280 Remington increases their versatility. This is a real sizzler, showing an impressive 3000 fps muzzle velocity in the 7mm-08 and 3150 fps in the 280.

Recent years have seen a dramatic increase in hunter recognition of the 284-caliber cartridge. This is especially true with the Remington 280. During the past two years it has become one of the most sought after chamberings for new rifles, even surpassing the demand in many sections for such well-established cartridges as the 270 Winchester and the 30-06.

In fact, due to the growing interest in the highly efficient 280 Remington, it is once again offered in the reliable Model 7600 pump action rifle on a limited, one-year basis. This new offering was



made available in June 1988. This should be good news for a lot of pump action fans.

To be effective and popular, any rifle/cartridge combination has to have at least three basic qualities: it must be accurate, it must be trouble-free, and it must be efficient. Over the years, I have fired scores of pump action Remingtons, starting with the old Model 760 and continuing right through the new Model 7600. Pump action rifles, in any chambering, are not supposed to be accurate, but that is not the case with either the Model 760 or the 7600. The accuracy of the Model 7600 is well established. Its free-floating barrel does not touch fore-end wood at any spot and is attached only to the receiver. From shot to shot there are no pressure points where metal can expand to press on wood or other parts.

The 1985 GAME NEWS survey revealed that the Remington Model 760 was the favorite of over 17 percent of Pennsylvania's hunters. Such a following shows that the pump action rifle is accurate, dependable and easy to use.

The 280 cartridge with the 140-grain soft point bullet is an ideal choice for all medium-size big game. Comparing its ballistics with other well known big game cartridges reveals that the 280 retains considerably more energy and velocity than many beyond 200 yards. Retained velocity also means flatter trajectory. With the new 120-grain entry, the long range varmint hunter may want to take a second look at this 28-caliber cartridge.

If you're interested in both class and efficiency, look over a Browning A-Bolt or a Remington Model Seven in the 7mm-08, or a Remington Model 700 Mountain Rifle or a Model 70 Winchester Winlite in a 280 chambering. If you want to go up the price ladder, Sako offers the 7mm-08 in their Carbine and short action Deluxe outfits.

A big game rifle is a major investment. Some think of it as a lifetime investment. That's why it's important to be very selective. The 7mm-08 and 280 Remington cartridges offer everything needed in Pennsylvania's big game woods. What more could you want?

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# *In the wind*

bob mitchell



Ducks Unlimited projects proved their worth during last summer's drought. According to United States and Canadian surveys, reports DU, pond numbers were at an all-time low in southern Alberta and were down 41 percent in the northcentral states. Of DU projects, however, roughly 70 percent held sufficient water to see broods through.

Last July a biologist and two assistants found 14 peregrine falcon nests along Alaska's Norton Sound. The trio banded 29 young from 12 of the nests, in an effort to learn more about the birds' movements and survival rates. In addition, six golden eagles, 11 rough-legged hawks and 5 gyrfalcons were also banded.

**The Environmental Defense Fund, reports the National Wildlife Federation, has found that acid precipitation accounts for 25 percent of the man-made nitrogen entering the Chesapeake Bay. Only fertilizer runoff contributes more.**

Ten years after its implementation, Nebraska's Wildlife Habitat Stamp Program has proven to be a resounding success. Through the sale of \$7.50 habitat stamps, which are required of all hunters over 16 years of age, along with federal grants, interest and gifts, \$20.7 million has been raised. Of those funds, \$6.1 million has been spent on improving wildlife habitat on private lands, \$6.7 million on land acquisitions (16,341 acres), and about \$8 million on developing wildlife habitat on public lands.

Last summer red wolf pups were born in the wild for the first time since at least 1975, when all red wolves known to exist were captured and placed in captivity. Two litters were produced in North Carolina by the animals released a year ago in the Alligator National Wildlife Refuge. At least one pup from each is known to have survived through weening. Of the four males and four females released less than two years ago, in an effort to reestablish the nearly extinct species in the wild, three have died.

The search is on for black-footed ferrets in Canada. Although Wyoming has long been thought to be the only home for the endangered species, it's now thought some may be found in Waterton Lakes National Park, Alberta. The search was launched after five sightings were reported last spring. Nobody has ever looked for ferrets in the park because it's long been assumed the secretive animals could exist only around prairie dogs, and none of those are in Waterton. Officials now find it easy to imagine black-footed ferrets thriving on the park's abundant ground squirrels and gophers.

**The common loon was recently named the official bird of Ontario. Among the reasons for its selection is that the common loon is one of the oldest bird species, it's sensitive to environmental changes, and it has long symbolized Canadian wilderness.**

Following a year-long undercover investigation, over 20 people were arrested for poaching in Kansas. During the investigation officers purchased 18 deer, for about \$100 apiece, and over a 1000 pounds of fish. They also witnessed many other illegal transactions, along with hawk and owl killings and many other violations.

A three-year, \$56,000 survey is underway to determine if any panthers exist in Arkansas. More than 200 sightings of the endangered animals have been reported to the state game and fish commission over the past 15 years, and the last three known to have been in the state were found, dead, in 1949, 1969 and 1975. Aerial surveys will be used to identify likely habitat, and then ground searches for tracks and other sign will be conducted.



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By Betsy Maugans

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